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Icebreaker

The Yacht Charter Magazine

The CEO's View

Anders Kurtén of Fraser Yachts

Croatia's Female Charter CEOs

New Power at the Helm

The Soul of the Sea

Life Aboard a Gulet

What Marinas Mean Today

by Dean Smith; D-Marin CCO

Full Circle in Sanremo

A Broker's Journey

International Charter Expo

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WORD OF EDITOR

Breaking Ice, Finding Wind

As we turn the pages of this new issue of Icebreaker Magazine, it's impossible not to feel a sense of wonder at the sheer momentum of the yacht charter industry. From the seasoned skippers navigating the Croatian archipelago to the stews preparing sunrise coffee aboard superyachts in the Cyclades, this is a world that continues to dazzle – not just with its beauty, but with its resilience and reinvention.

The bareboat sector has seen a dramatic journey over the past few years: ground to a halt during the COVID era, then supercharged in the rush of pent-up demand that followed, and now weathering a painful – but necessary – correction. This period of recalibration may be challenging, but it's also laying the groundwork for a more balanced, innovative, and sustainable future. There is every reason to be optimistic.

That same spirit carries the crewed charter world, where the Adriatic, once a well-kept secret, is slowly opening to the grandeur of superyachts. Step by step, the infrastructure is rising to meet the moment, as clients seek both authenticity and luxury in equal measure.



Still, the true heart of the global charter world beats in the Mediterranean – where history, culture, and coastline come together in effortless harmony.

It's here that so many journeys set sail, even as the winds begin to carry us farther afield. Zanzibar, the Seychelles, the Galápagos, Antarctica – once distant dreams, now charted courses for those in search of something rarer, richer, wilder.

Throughout this issue, you'll meet the women redefining leadership in Croatian charter companies, follow the strategic dance of corporate mergers, and catch a glimpse of a future where chartering isn't just about luxury – but also sustainability, inclusivity, and meaningful global connection.

We believe that the industry we cover is more than just a business. It's a compass – pointing us toward a life lived closer to the sea, to nature, and to one another.

The course ahead may hold its challenges, but it's full of promise. And if the past few years have taught us anything, it's that this industry knows how to trim its sails – and catch the next great wind.

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Island cruising CONCEPT

GROUPE BENETEAU
BRINGING DREAMS TO WATER



■ ICEBREAKER: Geoffrey, thank you for joining us. The Island Cruising Concept is attracting a lot of attention as a bold innovation in the industry. What was the core motivation behind this initiative?

■ GEOFFREY: Thank you. Yes, Island Cruising is more than a boat—it's a strategic vision for redefining the boating experience. At Groupe Beneteau, we are deeply committed to innovation that's both sustainable and customer-focused. Our goal is to open new horizons for all users, whether seasoned sailors or first-time charterers. This concept allows us to anticipate what future boaters and how, as industry leaders, we can meet those needs.

■ ICEBREAKER: How did the development process differ from traditional new boat launches?

■ GEOFFREY: We moved away from the traditional linear approach and embraced full-scale, real-world testing. Two prototypes were deployed in different geographies—Europe (Adriatic) and the British Virgin Islands in North America—and tested with over 120 users. We worked closely with charter professionals, dealers, and end users. This co-creation model, supported by

usage data gathered through Seanapps, enabled us to adapt and optimize the concept in real time. It's a much more dynamic and responsive way to innovate.

■ ICEBREAKER: What did you learn from those extensive tests?

■ GEOFFREY: The feedback was very positive. First, the idea of a slower, more peaceful and sociable cruising experience really struck a chord. Although the boat can reach speeds of up to 7.5 knots, most users preferred cruising comfortably at 5 to 5.5 knots, enjoying the ability to carry on with daily life aboard while underway. The design—especially the single-level living space, the large convivial kitchen, and the vast exterior area—was widely praised. Most importantly, even novice users found it easy to operate, thanks to automated energy management. From an environmental standpoint, the concept was a clear success. Solar panels supply 30 to 50% of onboard energy needs, reducing generator use by 90%, which means less noise, fewer emissions, and a much calmer onboard atmosphere. These features are not just eco-friendly—they're genuinely appealing to users.

■ ICEBREAKER: Did you identify any new trends in usage or target audiences?

■ GEOFFREY: Absolutely. What really stood out was how this boat unlocked new kinds of experiences and attracted a diverse range of customers. Beyond the traditional week-long charters, users envisioned it being perfect for day trips, events, and hospitality purposes. It appealed to a wide spectrum—from seasoned sailors and motorboaters to complete newcomers. In fact, more than 80% of rental or purchase intentions were linked to these fresh use cases, which opens up exciting possibilities for the charter market.

■ ICEBREAKER: Speaking of chartering—how does this concept connect with Groupe Beneteau's broader charter strategy?

■ GEOFFREY: It connects directly. The charter business has always been central to Groupe Beneteau. It's part of our DNA. From the Cyclades, Sun Loft, Sun Odyssey, and Oceanis lines, our legacy is deeply rooted in supporting charter operators with reliable, innovative boats. This year marks a historic turning point: for the first time, we're launching a dedicated charter organization at the Group level. Until now, each brand—Beneteau, Jeanneau, Lagoon, Excess—had its own approach. Now, while keeping their unique DNA, we're aligning under one agile structure that can better serve and respond to the needs of charter operators globally.

■ ICEBREAKER: That's a major shift. What can charter operators expect from this new structure?

■ GEOFFREY: Several things. First, we're integrating the charter use case from the very beginning of the design process. Every new model will now include a dedicated charter version, featuring specific layouts, durable materials, improved access to technical areas, and a simplified maintenance approach. These are tools of the trade—and we're treating them as such. Second, we're investing heavily in after-sales support and spare parts. We've introduced a two-year guarantee across our charter boats. For operators, that means peace of mind and lower total cost of ownership. We've also enhanced the co-development process, bringing key charter partners into discussions early. Instead of retrofitting boats for charter, we're building charter into the DNA of every boat from the start.

■ ICEBREAKER: Can you give us a preview of what's coming next?

■ GEOFFREY: Of course. We're continuing to push in both monohull and multihull segments. While



catamarans are growing fast, monohulls still represent the majority of charter fleets, and we remain fully committed to that market.

This year, we're excited to launch:

- The new **SUN ODYSSEY 415** will be presented in Cannes.
- The **OCEANIS 47** and **OCEANIS 52** will be presented in Cannes.
- The **JEANNEAU 455**, which will be announced at Cannes and presented at **Paris Boat Show** and in **Düsseldorf**.

All of these models are being developed with both owner and charter configurations, ensuring maximum versatility and appeal for different markets and use cases.

On the multihull side, the **Lagoon 43**, **Lagoon 38**, and **Excess 13** are already positioned as key models for charter operators.

And of course, we invite you to **visit us in Düsseldorf** to discover the Island Cruising concept in person—a fresh perspective on slow, sociable, and sustainable boating.

All these boats reflect our core values: **passion**, **audacity**, a **spirit of conquest**, and **transmission**. These values guide how we innovate, how we support our partners, and how we make the boating experience better for everyone.



■ ICEBREAKER: Final thoughts for charter professionals reading this?

■ GEOFFREY: We believe that charter is not just a sales channel—it's a cornerstone of the boating experience and a powerful driver of accessibility and growth for our industry. With our new organization, dedicated products, and strengthened support, Groupe Beneteau is doubling down on charter—not just for today, but for the long term. We're ready for the next chapter, and we're proud to write it together with our partners.



Oceanis 52

This year, five standout models of Beneteau Group are commanding attention. The Oceanis 52, Oceanis 47, Sun Odyssey 415, Lagoon 38, and Excess 13 do more than just float—they enchant.

The **OCEANIS 52** arrives with the grace of a sculpture and the soul of a traveler. Crafted by Biscontini-Nauta Design, it elevates the concept of cruising. Every detail inside the Oceanis 52 reflects BENETEAU’s commitment to creating a stylish and inspiring experience. The cockpit is spacious and open, flowing seamlessly into a sundeck that invites both lively conversation and peaceful solitude. Inside, the ambiance is one of serene sophistication. Sanded oak, rich textures, and ambient lighting create a space that feels at once grounded and ethereal. The owner’s suite is nothing short of indulgent, with a 160-centimeter bed, panoramic sea views, and the hushed calm of superior soundproofing.



Julien Gazeau

The Oceanis 52 redefines the standards of fast cruising monohulls—every line, material, and innovation thoughtfully designed to enhance the experience at sea.



Julien Gazeau

Alongside it, the **OCEANIS 47** offers a slightly more compact yet equally seductive experience. Timeless elegance meets expert design in this model, the result of a collaboration between Finot-Conq and Nauta Yacht Design. It perfectly embodies the DNA of the Oceanis line by prioritizing the sailor’s experience, resulting in a cruising yacht that is both more capable and better designed. Offering increased space and an improved layout compared to its predecessors, the cockpit serves as the social heart of the boat – the perfect gathering spot, designed for effortless manoeuvring and the quiet pleasure of an afternoon under sail. The Oceanis 47 is available in several layouts, allowing you to personalise the interior to suit your style with three distinct trim atmospheres: Sunset, which evokes a Mediterranean vibe; Pacific, inspired by the tranquility of a lagoon; and Ivory, offering timeless elegance.

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Sun Odyssey 415

Jeanneau's new **SUN ODYSSEY 415** continues the dialogue between tradition and innovation. Here, function transforms into emotion. The hull, inspired by the acclaimed **Sun Odyssey 410**, delivers exhilarating performance with elegance at the helm. Powerful yet graceful, it features a distinctive inverted bow that lifts clear of the water and a continuous, well-defined hull chine.



The thoughtfully designed L-shaped galley flows seamlessly into the cockpit and salon, creating an open, connected space. Generous natural light floods the interior, highlighting every detail of the design. The new Sun Odyssey 415 is an invitation to step aboard and rediscover the very essence of sailing: advanced functionality and clever innovation for a truly enriching cruising experience.



The motor yacht that feels like a sailboat

Expressing the belief that progress is seen with an eye to the past as well as the future, the Omikron Yachts OT60 proposes a simpler vision of sustainability. The perfect combination of the quiet, easygoing lifestyle of sailing and the convenience and space of a motor yacht makes the journey as enjoyable as the destination with a very low fuel consumption.

OT-60

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Lagoon 38

Next comes the **LAGOON 38**, a catamaran that feels like a secret hideaway at sea. It offers an astonishing sense of space, with wide transoms, modular seating, and a seamless flow between interior and exterior living areas. Light dances through its panoramic windows. Every detail has been thoughtfully reimagined to maximize ease and tranquility. Beyond comfort, the



Julien Gazeau



Julien Gazeau

Lagoon 38 makes a clear environmental statement. From solar panels to bio-sourced resins, it is designed for those who dream of sailing with both conscience and style.

“The interior design of the new Lagoon 38 aims to offer owners and their guests an exceptional onboard experience and lifestyle—superior to what is currently offered on the market,” says Massimo Gino of Nauta Design.



Excess 13

Maxime Horiaville

Finally, the **EXCESS 13** emerges as the wild card. Playful, responsive, and refreshingly bold, this cruising catamaran promises thrills for the modern sailor.

“The project was simple yet ambitious: to create a catamaran that would evolve and be balanced, reliable and offer good sensations, all combined with the comfort and interior volume that have made Excess such a success,” says Eric Levet of Cabinet Lombard, naval architect of the new Excess 13.

Though quieter in profile, its spirit is unmistakable. Light, energetic, and designed for those who crave a



polarYSE

connection through movement and wind, the Excess 13 stands apart.

These five yachts do not simply navigate the oceanse—they redefine what it means to be free. To sail them is to surrender to the rhythm of the sea and discover a new way to live.



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Interview by Tino Prosenik, Editor of Icebreaker Magazine

“WHAT A WORLD”

A Conversation with
Franz Schillinger on Sanlorenzo,
Design, and the Charter Equation

As we begin our interview, I'm sitting here in Zagreb with Franz Schillinger—a man whose career spans from the design halls of Vitra to the luxurious decks of Sanlorenzo. Overlooking the cityscape, we dive into a conversation about design, value, and why chartering isn't just a business model—it's a lifestyle.

■ TINO PROSENIK: Franz, your story is a fascinating one. How did your professional journey begin, and how did it lead to yachting and ultimately to Sanlorenzo?

■ FRANZ SCHILLINGER: I started at Vitra, one of the most iconic furniture companies in the world—home to designs by Charles and Ray Eames, the Vitra Design Museum, and buildings by legends like Zaha Hadid and Tadao Ando. I was Sales Director there, and Vitra taught me something vital: design isn't just aesthetics—it creates value. That principle is what connects my past to Sanlorenzo. Many of the same designers I worked with at Vitra are now shaping the interiors of Sanlorenzo yachts. That continuity in vision and sophistication drew me in.

■ TINO: That's an elegant connection—from high-design furniture to high-design yachts. What was your first encounter with Sanlorenzo like?

■ FRANZ: Ah, I still remember. It was at the Düsseldorf boat show. I stepped onto the Sanlorenzo stand and thought, what a world! Palm trees, the ambient lighting, Piero Lissoni's design language—it wasn't just a booth; it was a feeling. That feeling hasn't left me since.

■ TINO: Let's talk about that feeling you mentioned—what, in your view, sets Sanlorenzo apart from other brands?

■ FRANZ: It's not louder or faster—it's more refined. Sanlorenzo isn't just about function, though every yacht performs at the highest level. The differentiation is in how it feels to be aboard. The use of space, materials, light. Their asymmetric design, for instance, breaks the norms of symmetry in such a subtle and intelligent way that it actually enhances beauty and space.



■ FRANZ: For many, yes. Chartering is a smart way to make yacht ownership financially sustainable. A Sanlorenzo isn't just a boat—it's a statement of taste. And when you charter one, you're offering that experience to someone else. Think of it like renting a Bentley, not just a car.

■ TINO: So, for investors and owners alike, this is more than a lifestyle choice?

■ TINO: It seems counterintuitive—people are drawn to symmetry. So why does asymmetry work so well in this case?

■ FRANZ: Exactly. It's clever: by removing one side walkway, you gain substantial interior space. It's not chaotic, it's purposeful. As someone with a touch of OCD, I was surprised how calming and beautiful the asymmetry felt. It's a triumph of form and function.

The Charter Equation

■ TINO: You moved from Vitra into the yachting world in 2008, starting with the Beneteau group. Your work eventually expanded into larger yachts and now Sanlorenzo. Let's talk chartering. Is it essential for Sanlorenzo owners?

■ FRANZ: Absolutely. You can charter a Sanlorenzo 40m yacht, like Andiamo 2, for 8 to 10 weeks a year and generate close to €1 million annually. Considering the purchase price—around €25 million—it becomes a financially viable model. Plus, Sanlorenzo yachts hold their value better than many others, much like an Hermès bag. Their design, craftsmanship, and limited production create lasting value.

■ TINO: How does chartering impact resale value?

■ FRANZ: Positively, when done right. A well-maintained Sanlorenzo with proven charter income isn't a depreciating asset—it's a revenue-generating asset. When owners upgrade, which many do, the boat's track record becomes part of its appeal.



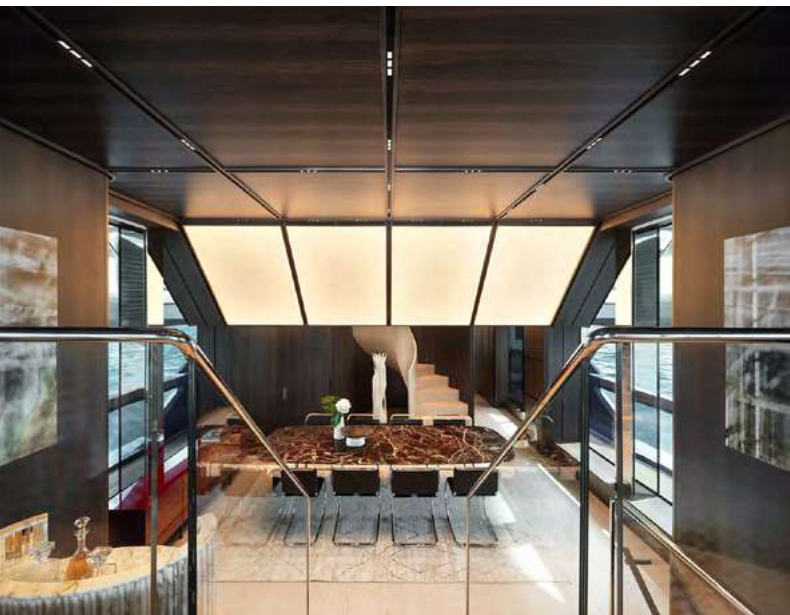
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The Adriatic Advantage

■ TINO: Your region—the Adriatic—is still growing as a luxury charter destination. Why base yachts there?

■ FRANZ: The Croatian Adriatic is stunning. Crystal-clear waters, fresh seafood, UNESCO sites, and growing infrastructure. Yes, it lacks the reputation of Sardinia or the Côte d’Azur, but it’s evolving. Places like Dubrovnik, Rovinj, and Lošinj now host luxury hotels and global brands. In time, the Adriatic will rival any Mediterranean hotspot.

■ TINO: And you’ve already placed more than a dozen Sanlorenzos in the region, haven’t you?

■ FRANZ: Yes, and more are coming. Clients love the quiet sophistication. They enjoy their yacht for a month or two and charter it the rest—up to 10 weeks, often fully booked. The Adriatic offers everything: privacy, beauty, and a developing support network.



Chartering as a Crew Training Tool

■ TINO: Money aside, how does chartering shape life on board—for both the yacht and the crew?

■ FRANZ: That’s the hidden value. Chartering keeps the crew sharp. When a yacht is idle, so is the crew. But during charter season, they’re on their toes—hosting new guests every week, adapting, anticipating. That experience makes them better for the owner. A professional crew that operates for 12 weeks a year is simply more skilled than one that’s idle for nine months.

■ TINO: So, charter is more than income—it’s continuous training.

■ FRANZ: Exactly. Charter trains the team, keeps the yacht active, and builds operational excellence. Plus, there are formal training programs like Sanlorenzo’s crew academies and captains’ meetings. But nothing beats real-world experience.

The Final Word

■ TINO: So, final thoughts—what does chartering mean for the future of yacht ownership?

■ FRANZ: Chartering is everything. It’s the enabler that makes this dream sustainable. It offers value, exposure, crew development, and long-term resale advantages. A Sanlorenzo isn’t just a pleasure vessel—it’s a business case, an artwork, and a floating expression of refined living.

■ TINO: “What a world,” indeed. Franz, thank you for this enlightening and engaging conversation.

■ FRANZ: My pleasure. Let’s get more people onboard—literally and figuratively.



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Observing the superstructure that reaches forward, and the beach area with the proportions of a large terrace, it becomes immediately clear that the SX line is a revolutionary project. Functions and uses of spaces intertwine, giving rise to a „crossover“ yacht that is perfect for the sophisticated contemporary owner and with 4 cabins perfect for charter.



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An Icebreaker Magazine Interview

Fraser Yachts CEO's View:

ANDERS KURTÉN on the Present and Future

■ ICEBREAKER: Anders, your path to becoming CEO of Fraser Yachts wasn't exactly traditional. From music to IT to boatbuilding — how did that lead you here?

■ ANDERS: I often say that life is what happens while you're busy making other plans. I grew up in Helsinki, originally pursuing music—I studied piano at the conservatory. But after Finland's recession in the 90s, I pivoted into business and web technology.

Eventually, I left the corporate world to attend a wooden boatbuilding school. That hands-on experience in boatyards, building and restoring yachts, gave me a deep appreciation of the craftsmanship behind the product we now help people buy, manage, or charter.

So, while the path has been unorthodox, what links all of it—music, building, leadership—is a strong sense of purpose, and a desire to shape meaningful experiences. That's ultimately what yachting is about.

■ ICEBREAKER: Today, you lead one of the most globally recognized names in yacht brokerage. Where does charter fit into Fraser's priorities?

■ ANDERS: Charter is absolutely fundamental. While brokerage may generate headline figures, charter is the engine of continuity. It's often the first touchpoint between clients and our industry—a way to experience the yachting lifestyle without long-term commitment.

For Fraser, charter represents not just revenue, but long-term relationship-building. Many charter clients go on to become owners. Others become repeat charterers or refer friends and family. And behind each charter are multiple layers of service—from itinerary planning to crew placement to yacht management.

So, strategically, charter is more than a revenue stream. It's a foundation for growth and loyalty.

■ ICEBREAKER: During COVID, charter exploded. What's happened since? And what does it tell us about where the market's headed?

■ ANDERS: COVID truly changed the game. People who'd never considered a yacht charter suddenly saw it as the safest, most private vacation option. First-time clients jumped from about 10% of our charter bookings to nearly 30%.

Not all of those clients stayed—but many did. And those who stuck around helped us reach a new baseline: higher average demand, more diverse client expectations, and a much broader demographic footprint.

So yes, demand has normalized from the peak, but we're operating at a new, more dynamic level. And I believe that trend will continue—with digital visibility and experience design playing a big role in how we retain and grow that client base.

■ ICEBREAKER: Speaking of experience design, how do you see the role of technology evolving in charter? Are we becoming more digital-first?

■ ANDERS: We are—but cautiously. Digital platforms and AI tools are improving efficiency, helping with lead generation, client qualification, and targeted marketing. And that's great. The top of the funnel has widened.

But here's the reality: in superyacht charter, clients still choose people, not platforms. Booking systems are fantastic tools, but they don't create trust. And without trust, you won't close a deal—especially when you're talking about six-figure-plus, high-touch vacations.

That's why I'm not concerned about digital replacing brokers or managers. The value of the human relationship is higher than ever—it just has to be earned through credibility, consistency, and firsthand knowledge.

■ ICEBREAKER: How important is it, then, for brokers and managers to continue networking in person?

■ ANDERS: It's critical. Yachting—especially charter—is a relationship business. You're not selling a commodity. You're curating an experience that must feel seamless, bespoke, and safe to the client. And to do that well, you need to build strong relationships across the board—with owners, captains, charter managers, and fellow brokers.

That can't be done entirely online. You have to walk the yacht. You need to look the captain in the eye. You need to understand not just what the vessel offers, but how the crew works, what the ambience feels like, and what kind of client would thrive on board.

Events like the B2B charter shows aren't just about marketing—they're about maintaining the connective tissue of the industry. When brokers meet CAs in person, or when managers tour yachts directly, that knowledge builds trust and turns into better client service. The stronger the network, the stronger the industry.



■ ICEBREAKER: Let's shift to geography. Where do you see charter growth coming from—geographically speaking?

■ ANDERS: The Mediterranean remains core—it has everything: history, culture, infrastructure, and world-class destinations. But we're watching several emerging areas closely.

The Red Sea has massive untapped potential. Pristine waters, unspoiled reefs, and a 2,000 km coastline



that's barely been touched. Infrastructure is starting to develop there. Asia is also interesting, though development is slower. Places like Thailand and Indonesia have natural appeal, but logistics and bureaucracy can still be barriers.

Closer to home, the Adriatic is showing promise. Croatia and Montenegro offer beauty and convenience. But to scale, they need continued investment in infrastructure and awareness. The market will come if the experience is ready.

■ ICEBREAKER: Sustainability is a big conversation across yachting. But how real is the impact—and is it more about PR than practice?

■ ANDERS: I've been working on sustainability in yachting since my time at Baltic Yachts, where we built full-electric 100+ footers capable of transoceanic passages without fossil fuels. So I can say with confidence: the technology is here. You can build a sustainable superyacht today.



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But that's not enough. Out of 6,000 to 7,000 superyachts currently in existence, only 200 or so are built new each year. So the real gains will come from improving the existing fleet.

That's where charter operators, managers, and owners can take simple but effective steps: switch to HVO fuel, reduce cruising speeds, connect to green shore power, and train crews in sustainable practices. None of these are revolutionary—but combined, they make a big difference.



Guy Fleury



And yes, branding matters. But so does doing the right thing. We owe that to future generations, and as high-profile service providers, we're in a position to lead by example.

■ ICEBREAKER: Finally, what kind of leadership do you believe this industry needs right now?

■ ANDERS: Collaborative, forward-thinking, and people-centric. You can't lead in yachting without understanding that our true product isn't the yacht—it's the experience. And that experience is created by people.

At Fraser, we have 25+ nationalities and speak over 15 languages. That diversity is a strength—but only if we create a culture that values openness, shared purpose, and mutual respect.

And we need to think beyond silos. Charter brokers, managers, fleet owners, and booking platforms shouldn't compete at the expense of trust. Our success is interdependent. We all rise together—or not at all.



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REFLECTIONS FROM THE HELM

Lessons from the 2025 Med Charter Season

By SOS Yachting

As the 2025 Mediterranean charter season draws to a close, captains, brokers, and owners are stepping ashore and taking stock - not only of the summer's cruising highlights, but of the increasingly complex regulatory landscape we've all had to navigate.

More than ever, this season underscored a critical truth: successful chartering isn't just about where you go, but how you operate. Compliance, clarity, and confidence have become the cornerstones of a well-run charter, and the regulatory changes across the Mediterranean were anything but subtle.

Croatia's formal removal from the FATF grey list bolstered its reputation as a fiscally sound jurisdiction, while Italy tightened enforcement through expanded e-invoicing obligations and a new law enforcing fiscal agents to set cash aside in the form of a bond guarantee depending on the number of owning companies they look after. Greece continued the rollout of its digital charter licensing platform, with 2025 marking the first full season of its practical application following a 'soft' launch the year before. Meanwhile, France and Spain ramped up on-the-ground inspections, while Monaco continued its efforts to demonstrate its commitment to enhancing its anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CTF) framework to align with international standards. The message was clear: regulators are watching, paperwork matters, and every yacht must have its house in order.

For many owners and charter professionals, these developments added complexity to an already demanding operational environment. VAT rates themselves remained relatively stable - 13% in Croatia and Greece, 20% in France, 21% in Spain, and 22% in Italy - but the level of scrutiny increased significantly. Authorities are



Maxime Vandenberghe / Unsplash

no longer content with timely filings alone; they now demand detailed, documented proof of compliance at every step: AIS logs showing time spent outside EU waters, complete APA reports, and matching receipts with VAT added where appropriate.

Throughout the season, SOS Yachting was proud to support its clients at every stage - from onboarding new vessels to managing mid-season inspections and ensuring every charter contract met current fiscal standards. Our multilingual teams across the Mediterranean - Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, and Spain - provided timely, expert assistance, often behind the scenes, ensuring operations continued smoothly despite mounting regulatory pressure.

Looking ahead to 2026, the trajectory is clear: increased digitalisation, more detailed regulations, and greater harmonisation across jurisdictions—though local nuances will still demand careful interpretation. Early planning, continuous education, and thorough documentation will be more important than ever.

As the Med season winds down, attention shifts to the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. The Bahamas remains firm in its approach to the equivalent of European VAT (two separate taxes owed), though effective enforcement will require strong alignment between the Inland Revenue and Port Authority. Meanwhile, Thailand is actively working to implement a more structured VAT regime for yachting, a clear sign that the global charter landscape is following in the Med's footsteps. These regions remind us that VAT compliance is far from becoming obsolete, and—more importantly—that local expertise remains essential.

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Croatia's Female Charter CEOs: NEW POWER AT THE HELM

In a global yachting industry still largely helmed by men, Croatia is quietly leading a new wave. From Split to Sukošan, a group of women are not only running charter companies—they're redefining what leadership in this sector looks like. Combining operational discipline with empathy, sustainability, and innovation, these five CEOs represent a fresh course for the industry.

At first glance, the yacht charter world might seem like a place of tradition—sun-bleached marinas, seasoned skippers, and long-standing hierarchies. But in Croatia, change is not only on the horizon—it's already docked.

The rise of female leaders in this space is not a symbolic gesture. It's a realignment of priorities: from loud authority to quiet competence, from rigid systems to agile thinking, and from exclusivity to inclusion.

These women are not asking for space — they're claiming it through work ethic, results, and vision.

Meet five women making serious waves: Marija Sekulić Dumanić from Sail Club Croatia, Katarina Vujević Babara at Euronautic, Dina Botica of Asta Yachting, Marijana Ćorluka from MK Yacht Explorer, and Betina Županović at Splendid Yachting.

Marija Sekulić Dumanić SAIL CLUB CROATIA

Marija's charter journey began as a student looking for summer work. That first job turned into a 15-year career, spanning roles in booking, base operations, and even yacht manufacturing. Today, she runs Sail Club Croatia—a three-base operation with teams in Kaštela, Trogir, and Pula.

"Guests used to be sailors with stories. Today, they want lifestyle and luxury—generators, toys, and Instagram moments."

Marija believes strong teams and a culture of belonging matter more than titles.



"Women have always been essential in charter—in sales, in operations, in problem-solving. Leadership is about competence and consistency."

Marijana Ćorluka MK YACHT EXPLORER

Marijana moved to Kaštela looking for a new start—and found it in charter. "It happened almost by accident," she says. "But I loved the mix of logistics, energy, and people."

With no family background in yachting, she worked her way up and eventually founded her own company, MK Yacht Explorer. "The hardest part was proving myself in a world where I was new. You have to know more, do more, and push harder."

She's candid about the early challenges: "Sometimes, things I said needed to be repeated by a man to be taken seriously. But over time, results speak." Her view on the future is optimistic:

"The industry will be more tech-driven, more diverse, and more balanced. Women won't just be in support roles—they'll be running things. Because they're good at it."





Katarina Vujević Babara EURONAUTIC

Katarina started in 2004 as a receptionist in Biograd. She quickly became essential to the company's growth, rising to the role of director by 2008. Today, she manages a fleet of 117 boats.

"The hardest part isn't the guests—it's navigating shifting regulations. Every year brings a new rule no one understands."

She downplays the gender divide:

"Every charter firm has a brilliant woman holding things together. Whether you're a man or a woman doesn't matter. Either you know the job, or you don't."

Dina Botica ASTA YACHTING



Dina joined the family business after university, working her way through every role—from reception to CEO. "That ground-up experience helps me solve problems and improve operations."

She notes the growing complexity of charter seasons and the strain on resources in the post-COVID era. "Every year is different. Adaptability is everything."

"We don't talk much about gender, but it's women who usually manage guest contact—emails, check-ins, problem-solving. We're often the start and end of the guest journey."



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Betina Županović SPLENDID YACHTING



Betina's story begins on the sea—quite literally. Growing up on the island of Murter, she spent her childhood exploring the coastline by boat. During her student years, she worked boat shows, which sparked a passion for the industry. In 2010, she entered charter professionally, and by 2014, co-founded Splendid Yachting from scratch. “We started with nothing but a clear vision. We wanted to create something unique in Croatia.”

She describes ongoing challenges—from sluggish bureaucracy to the pressure of delivering flawless guest service. “In crewed charter, assembling the right team is vital. The season is short and intense. There's no room for error.”

“Charter without a woman's touch rarely reaches the highest standard. We bring attention to detail, organisation, and empathy. Yes, I had to prove myself—but that commitment pays off.”

Looking ahead, Betina sees more women stepping into strategic and leadership roles:

“Not because it's fashionable, but because they bring a sharper, more intuitive energy to their teams.”

The Course Ahead

These five women aren't exceptions—they're leading indicators. Their companies are proof that excellence comes from competence, not convention. Whether facing regulatory chaos, shifting guest expectations, or structural gender bias, they navigate with focus, humility, and resolve.

And as the next generation of charter leaders emerges, these women offer more than inspiration—they offer

a blueprint. One rooted in curiosity, consistency, and care. From nurturing teams to raising service standards, they are building something bigger than fleets or profits. They are helping reshape the very culture of Croatian yachting.

In a world quick to celebrate disruption, their story reminds us that lasting change often comes quietly—not with noise, but with intent. And in that sense, Croatia's female charter CEOs are not just steering yachts. They're steering the future.



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By Captains Stelios Sarafoglou and Robert Novak

AT THE HELM AROUND THE WORLD:

Chartering Through the Eyes of Two Captains

Step aboard and pour yourself a coffee. You're about to set sail with two captains who've spent decades guiding some of the world's most discerning guests through the Med, the Maldives, the Red Sea — even Antarctica. Between them, Captains Stelios Sarafoglou and Robert Novak have navigated superyachts and chartered classics through some of the most sought-after waters on the planet. But as they'll tell you, it's not just the views that change from port to port — it's the people too.

Here's what they've learned from the helm.



Captain STELIOS SARAFOGLOU

A Greek native raised in Piraeus, Stelios's life at sea began early, sailing with his father on merchant ships. A planned stint in yachting turned into a 16-year career aboard Magna Grecia, where he rose from second officer to captain, leading over 50 charter weeks across the Med, Maldives, and beyond. Known for

his calm leadership and thoughtful approach to guest experience, Stelios has helmed yachts through family-friendly cruises in the Ionian, high-glamour charters in Capri, and even polar expeditions to Antarctica.

The West Med: Glamour, Demands, and the Chase

■ ROBERT: In the Western Mediterranean – places like Monaco, St. Tropez, Portofino – clients are on the move. It's fast-paced, glamorous, and loud in the best kind of way. Guests have high expectations. They want rare wines, last-minute Michelin bookings, sunset selfies in front of iconic harbours. They treat the yacht like a high-speed vehicle – a way to chase experiences, not necessarily to enjoy the boat itself.



Captain ROBERT NOVAK

Hailing from Slovenia, Robert began his maritime career in commercial shipping before pivoting to yachting in 2009. His rise through the ranks included senior roles aboard some of the world's most prestigious superyachts, including the 107-metre Lana and the iconic 147-metre A+.

With a background in diving and a sharp operational mind, Robert thrives on challenging charters and complex logistics. From the Red Sea to Sardinia, he brings a sharp eye for detail and a dry wit to every deck he commands.

■ STELIOS: Yes, in the South of France, everything runs smoothly—logistics are efficient, marinas are well-equipped, and provisioning is top-notch. Guests want to disembark, shop, dine, and be seen. Italy, on the other hand, brings a more sensual edge—there's more swimming, more indulgence in lifestyle. Capri, Amalfi, Positano—they're not just destinations, they're social arenas. It's yachting's answer to a catwalk..



The Adriatic: Nature, Nostalgia, and Navigating Red Tape

■ ROBERT: Croatia holds a special place for many of our American guests – they love it. The coastline is stunning, the water is clean, and there's something about those old towns – Hvar, Split, Dubrovnik – that hits differently. But changes are coming. New anchoring restrictions, stern-to-rock bans... it's creating friction. I understand the importance of protecting the environment—but there has to be balance.

■ STELIOS: For me, anchoring in the Adriatic is magical – especially around Montenegro. Guests don't want to wake up in a marina on hot stone.

They want to hear the water, jump in, feel like they're truly somewhere special. That's the charm of Croatia. But winds can be tough, and yes, the infrastructure lags behind Western Europe.

■ ROBERT: And yet, that glamour comes with operational headaches. France, in particular, is tightly regulated. When you're running a 3,000 GT yacht and trying to land a guest near Nice airport, the bureaucracy around pilots, tenders, and timings can feel endless.

The East Med: Soulful Waters and Slower Rhythms

■ STELIOS: The East Med – especially Greece – is personal to me. But funnily enough, I only started cruising it as a captain after 2019. What strikes me most is how people use yachts differently here. Sure, Mykonos and Santorini are magnets – even the most chilled clients want their selfie there – but in the quieter Ionian or Dodecanese, they rediscover the joy of waking up in silence, surrounded by nature.

■ ROBERT: Greece and Turkey offer a slower pace. Guests love waking up on a different island each day—they savour the journey. In Turkey, there's a sense of authenticity that truly resonates: the markets, the coastal villages, even the food. And it extends your season—October in Bodrum is still sunny, warm, and perfect for chartering.

■ STELIOS: In August, when the Aegean gets hit by the Meltemi winds, I always try to guide families to the Ionian. It's calm, beautiful, and far more enjoyable. Guests want to jump into the water before breakfast, not hold on for dear life in the swell.



Maldives & Red Sea: Chilling Out in Paradise

■ STELIOS: The Maldives? Beautiful – but boring. That sounds harsh, but it's true. The charters there are about diving, spa days, slow mornings. Half the time, guests are split between the yacht and resort villas. For the crew, downtime feels static. There's not much to do or prepare. It's paradise, but with the volume turned down.

■ ROBERT: Red Sea? Now that's a developing story. Diving is phenomenal – especially in Egypt. But all roads seem to lead to Saudi these days. They're building fast – marinas, resorts, infrastructure. It's still a grey zone in some respects, but if they keep opening up, it could be the next big thing.

Beyond the Usual: Antarctica, Norway, and the Pacific Dream

■ STELIOS: I recently did a charter to Antarctica. I didn't sleep properly for 32 days – the anchorage situation with drifting icebergs is insane. But the views? Otherworldly. You step out of your cabin and forget everything. It's the closest I've come to something spiritual at sea. I'd do it again in a heartbeat.

■ ROBERT: My dream? The South Pacific. Tahiti, Bora Bora – places where the yacht isn't a vehicle, but a floating home. In the Med, clients chase places. Out there, they use the yacht to anchor into an experience – diving, hiking, slowing down. It's not about what you're trying to get to. It's about where you already are.

A Final Thought: The Yacht as a Home, or a Taxi

■ STELIOS: We both agree – the further you get from the Med, the more guests treat the yacht as a home. They get to know the crew. They want their coffee on deck, a chat, a swim. It's personal.

■ ROBERT: Yes. In the Med, the yacht is a platform – a means to chase the next thing. In places like the Maldives or the Pacific, the yacht is the destination. And for us, as captains, that shift changes everything.

Final Thought: One Sea, Many Worlds

What becomes clear – when you listen to captains who've steered yachts from Monaco to Mykonos, the Maldives to the Marquesas – is that there's no "one way" to experience life at sea.

Each region offers its own rhythm, its own flavour of magic. The West Med is elegance and energy, all champagne sprays and sharp suits. The East Med is soul and story, where every island has a legend and every sunrise brings peace. The Adriatic is raw, layered with history and nature. And beyond – in places like the Red Sea, the South Pacific, and even Antarctica – the sea becomes something even deeper: a place to slow down, to feel small in the best possible way.

There's beauty in the contrasts – in the pace, in the people, in how guests use the yacht differently in each place. And that's what keeps this life endlessly fascinating for those at the helm. Because for every port left behind, there's another horizon ahead. And no two days – or charters – are ever the same.



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THE SOUL OF THE SEA

Necrus Media, Turkey

By Alice Burns, TempleWorld

LIFE ABOARD *a Gulet*

What Is a Gulet, Anyway?

Gulets (pronounced goo-let) are broad-beamed, hand-built wooden yachts that originated along the southwestern coast of Turkey. Originally designed for sponge diving and cargo transport, they've evolved into some of the Mediterranean's most characterful and comfortable charter vessels.

Typically ranging from 20 to 40 metres, they're large enough to be spacious, yet small enough to anchor in tucked-away bays where superyachts often can't go.

These vessels blend traditional craftsmanship—gleaming mahogany, hand-knotted rugs, and vintage brass fittings—with the modern comforts you'd expect: air conditioning, ensuite cabins, and Wi-Fi. Some gulets are family-run, handed down through generations, which adds a personal touch often missing from larger, more corporate operations.

Long before gulets carried sun-seeking travelers along the Turkish coast, they were humble working boats—born not of luxury, but of labor.

Along the harbors of Bodrum and Marmaris, sponge divers once sailed these broad-beamed wooden vessels out to sea. With lungs full of breath and nets ready to collect the sea's harvest, they dove deep and brought back nature's treasures. These divers—heroes of salt and sinew—formed the first chapters of what would, decades later, become one of the Mediterranean's most soulful ways to travel.

Today, that lineage continues. And though the nets and sponges have long been replaced with paddleboards, chilled rosé, and curious guests from every corner of the world, the gulet still carries something old, something timeless—something real.

A Floating House Party, Not a Floating Palace

If superyachts are the five-star hotels of the sea, gulets are boutique boltholes—charming, personalised, and quietly luxurious. You're not dealing with uniformed crew and rigid schedules, but warm hospitality and a relaxed, do-as-you-like vibe. Meals are tailored to your tastes, often based on what's fresh at the market that morning. There's usually a selection of paddleboards, snorkels, and other toys for exploring the water, but no pressure to 'perform' your holiday. In the ever-expanding world of crewed yacht charters—where helipads, infinity pools, and white-gloved stewards abound—there exists a quiet rebellion: the gulet.

To step aboard a gulet is to trade polished chrome for polished teak, and to swap formality for familiarity. The experience is less about being served and more about being welcomed—less about status, more about atmosphere.

"It's convivial," guests say again and again. That one word: convivial. Because a gulet doesn't feel like a hotel or a cruise ship or a superyacht. It feels like a house party or family and friends gathering at sea. A floating dinner table, a shared bottle, a shady deck filled with books and conversation and salt in your hair.



OCEAN YACHTING

'Spending time on a yacht is a unique experience. It means enjoying a feeling of freedom beyond words'

Nicolò Venturi,
Co-Founder of Ocean Yachting



From Students to Storytellers

The gulet charter experience as we know it began in earnest in the 1980s, when adventurous travelers—often older adults and post-graduate students—sought to explore the archaeological richness of the Turkish coast.

When roads were still winding and tricky, the most comfortable—and most memorable—way to travel was by boat. Sailing from Kuşadası to Antalya meant stepping back into history—pausing at ruins inaccessible by land, uncovering the silent stories of ancient traders, temples, and tombs.

For those early guests, a gulet wasn't just a means of transport. It was a time machine.

Gulet Comfort: Rustic Charm Meets Turkish Warmth

Though today's gulets vary in style and luxury, their charm remains rooted in authenticity. Early boats were simple: marine toilets, shared bathrooms, pinewood hulls, and home-cooked food served by the crew that often included a captain, his wife, and a young nephew learning the ropes.

And even now, with air-conditioning, plush beds, and elegant finishes, many gulets still echo their roots. The crew may be fewer in number than on superyachts—but what they lack in numbers, they make up for in heart. They remember your name. They remember your drink. And yes, they still prepare the food themselves—fresh Turkish dishes, overflowing with herbs, vegetables, olive oil, and sunshine.

Turquoise Coast

Turkey's Muğla coastline is not only stunning for its turquoise waters and rugged beauty, but it's also steeped in deep historical and cultural heritage that spans thousands of years.

This spectacular coastline, is a living open-air museum of civilizations—Carian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and

Ottoman. Its blend of natural beauty and layered history makes it one of the most culturally rich regions in the Mediterranean.

A Boat Built for Togetherness

On a gulet, you're not a guest—you're family. Crews are often local, and there's a warm intimacy to the experience: the captain might suggest a secret anchorage he's known since boyhood; the chef might pop out of the galley to ask how spicy you like your meze. It's luxury, yes, but with soul and sincerity.

There's also a social alchemy that happens aboard a gulet. With space for 6–12 guests, they're ideal for families or groups of friends. Everyone finds their groove—the kids leap off the bow, grandparents read in the shade, and evenings unfold with candlelit dinners and stories under the stars.

Unlike the compartmentalized decks of larger yachts, a gulet is designed around communal life. The aft deck—broad, shaded, and breezy—is the social heart.



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Meals are eaten together, games played, books read, stories swapped. There's always somewhere to retreat—a sunbed, a bow bench, a swim platform—but togetherness is the default mode.

It's intimate without being intrusive. Private yet shared. As one guest put it: "We were all doing our own thing... together."

The Evolution: Homemade Superyachts

In recent years, a new breed of gulet has emerged—boats with the DNA of a gulet and the ambition of a superyacht. Larger cabins. Fewer guests. Sleek finishes and king-sized beds. Some even have jacuzzis.

But peel back the varnish and you'll still find a gulet. The wood, the layout, the local crew. Aesthetics have changed. The essence has not.

These "homemade superyachts," as some call them, draw a new kind of traveler—guests accustomed to luxury but seeking something more genuine, more welcoming. Though they may cost more than a four-star hotel, they still come in well below the price of true superyachts, offering the freedom of the sea without any snobbery.



MEHTAP ÇELIKOK,
ECE Yachting

For me, gulets are more than just boats — they are living stories of the sea. For the past four years, I've been curating tailor-made charters aboard these wooden yachts, crafting journeys that feel as personal as they are memorable.



İDRIS UÇAR,
Sanda Yachting

"I have spent my whole life on and around gulets. I cannot imagine an experience of the Aegean without one. The feel of the wood, the comfort of the aft cushions, the aromas from the kitchen - this is the soul of the sea."



More Than a Charter: A Way of Life

To charter a gulet is not just to visit the Turkish coast—it's to inhabit it. To float gently between ancient cities and pine-covered coves. To dive off the deck before breakfast. To taste time, sun, and salt in every bite.

In an industry increasingly obsessed with more—more steel, more crew, more marble—gulets offer less. And in that less, many find something greater. Because gulets aren't just a category of yacht. They're a culture. A mood. A memory waiting to be made.

And in their slowness, stillness, and simplicity, they remind us of something we didn't even realize we'd lost.

The Takeaway

Gulet holidays aren't about flash. They're about freedom, slow living, and rediscovering how blissful the sea can be when you're not rushing from port to port. There's a rare magic in these wooden boats—a sense of ease that lingers long after the tan fades.



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By Dean Smith, CCO of D-Marin

WHAT MARINAS MEAN TODAY AND WHERE THEY'RE HEADED

I didn't start out in yachting. My background is in domestic tourism in the UK, where I managed holiday parks for Bourne Leisure. It was hands-on, people-focused work that taught me invaluable lessons. That experience shaped how I later approached the world of marinas—not just how to run them, but how to rethink what they can be.



Today, when people think of a marina, they still often think in static terms: a place to park boats. But that's a long-outdated view. A marina isn't a car park on water. It's a destination. A hub. A community. And if it's done right, it's a year-round ecosystem that adds real value to the lives of boaters and to the coastal towns they call in on.

At D-Marin, we've built a network of premium marinas spanning the Mediterranean and extending beyond—to Croatia, Greece, Turkey, Italy, France, and the UAE. Each one is different, but they all share the same DNA: great service, beautiful locations, and an ambition to enhance the boating experience. That might mean seamless check-ins, it might mean curating itineraries between our marinas, or it might mean something as simple as having the right kind of barbecue on a Saturday night to bring a community of boaters together.

We give considerable thought to what encourages people to linger. During peak season, that might be events, parties, rallies. In quieter months, it's about reliability, making it a reliable partner for maintenance and upgrades. The idea is simple: a marina should never feel like it's hibernating.



And the future? I think it's convenience, connectivity, and community. The boats will still need berths—that won't change. But the people? They're changing. My daughter's generation has grown up with smart tech at their fingertips.

They'll expect to monitor their boat remotely, book a berth with a tap, maybe even get a drone-delivered lunch. Why not?

Physically, marinas might not look radically different. But digitally and experientially, they'll evolve. More leisure alignment. More curated experiences. And more integration with cities and culture. Think marina-as-resort, not just marina-as-moorage.





And I see the sector continuing to shift away from pure ownership and towards shared models. Charter fleets, syndicates, boat clubs. That doesn't reduce the marina's importance—it amplifies it.

Because these new users still need all the same things: safety, service, and something special.

What drives all of this is one idea: reasons to visit. That's our north star. Whether it's the natural beauty of Croatia's Kornati Islands, the urban energy of Athens'

Marina Zea, or the elegance of Göcek in Turkey, we're always asking: what makes someone alter their route to stop here?

If a marina can do that—change someone's itinerary—then it's not just successful. It's essential.



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JESPER RÖNNGARD

A Course Well Sailed

From startup to a corporate merger and creation of the world's largest yacht charter network

In the world of yacht chartering, few names are as closely associated with vision, growth, and strategic transformation as Jesper Rönngard. The Swedish entrepreneur and founder of Navigare Yachting has spent the past quarter-century navigating an industry known for both its romance and volatility.

From humble beginnings as a summer skipper to overseeing a €100 million global enterprise, Rönngard's journey mirrors the evolution of the charter industry itself – lean, resilient, and increasingly sophisticated.

But 2024 marked a turning point. Jesper stepped away from the company he had founded in 2001, following the buyout of his shares by Blue Sea Holding – a strategic investor that had previously acquired both Dream Yacht

Charter and a 50% stake in Navigare Yachting. The move consolidated two of the largest brands in yacht chartering under a single operational umbrella, creating the most extensive charter fleet on the planet.

Now, for the first time, Jesper Rönngard reflects publicly on the rise of Navigare Yachting, the rationale behind the sale, and the uncharted waters that lie ahead for the merged entity.

A Business Born on the Water

It all started as a student gig. In the mid-1990s, while studying business at Lund University, Jesper and a friend spent their summers working as skippers in Greece. “What could be better than working as a skipper in a fabulous Mediterranean country?” he recalls. But that experience also revealed a glaring gap between client expectations and the level of service available. The idea was simple but powerful: control the yachts, control the quality, and deliver a superior product.

In 2001, Navigare Yachting was born. With six Bavaria yachts and six private investors, the company opened



its first base in Poros, Greece. “At first, we just wanted enough boats to run a base profitably,” Jesper says. “Maybe 30 or 50. There was no master plan for global expansion.”

But expansion came quickly. By 2004, Navigare Yachting expanded into Croatia, then the Caribbean, and later Thailand. The strategy was clear: diversify both destinations and source markets to spread risk and build resilience.

Peak Performance and Painful Growth

By the early 2020s, Navigare Yachting had become one of the most recognised names in yacht chartering. At its height in 2023–2024, the company delivered yachts worth a combined \$100 million and managed a fleet of roughly 300 boats, many of them large catamarans, with average values well over a million dollars. Annual charter revenue hovered between €30 and €40 million, boosted by added services like skippers, cleaning, and transfers.

But behind the scenes, the ride was far from smooth.

Saskia Spethmann





Saskia Spethmann

COVID-19 brought the industry to a near halt. “I had to let go of 40% of the global staff. It was heartbreaking,” Jesper recalls. And yet, just a year later, the pendulum swung the other way. “We went from too few customers to too few boats—and not enough crew to operate them.”

The post-pandemic boom came at a cost. Yacht prices soared, raising the break-even point for charter operators. “Shipyards raised prices so sharply that the market couldn’t keep pace,” he explains. “We’re still feeling the effects of that correction.”

The PPF Deal: Stability at a Cost

In 2021, Jesper sold 50% of Navigare Yachting to Blue Sea Holding—a joint venture between Groupe Beneteau and Czech investment powerhouse PPF Group.

At the same time, PPF acquired a controlling stake in Dream Yacht Charter, signaling a coordinated strategy to consolidate the yacht charter market.

“I realised during the pandemic that no matter how global we had become, there were still risks I couldn’t control,” Jesper says. “I wanted a partner, some diversification, and a war chest.”

At that point, Navigare Yachting remained operationally independent. Jesper continued as CEO, and no collaboration existed between Navigare Yachting and Dream Yacht Charter. “They were part of the same basket but run completely separately,” he clarifies.

That changed in 2024.

Exit and the Era of Consolidation

By mid-2024, operational pressures were mounting. Inventory had surged, particularly in the BVI, but charter bookings weren’t keeping pace with the rapid increase in yacht sales. Jesper proposed a bold strategic shift to overhaul Navigare’s offering. “I presented a full action plan to the board,” he recalls. “But it was rejected.”

The stalemate forced a decision. Jesper offered to invest further capital to preserve his 50% stake, but the board—now controlled by PPF—declined. In the summer of 2024, Jesper exited entirely. He transitioned into a role overseeing yacht sales in the US for both brands before finally stepping down in early 2025.

With full ownership secured, Blue Sea began integrating the operations of Dream Yacht Charter and Navigare Yachting. Although the brands remained legally distinct, management was centralised. “You had one sales manager, one operations director,” Jesper explains, “but the local bases were still run separately.”

What Comes Next?

Does Jesper believe the merger will succeed?

“It depends,” he says carefully. “There’s a focus on cost savings—sharing staff, merging departments. Nothing wrong with that, but you can’t cut your way to profitability. You need to understand what drives revenue and I’m not sure that they do. I also think overhead costs have been allowed to explode, and that’s just not sustainable.”

He’s also concerned about talent retention. “Staff turnover has been too high. And I see gaps in competence and knowledge at the managerial level. That’s worrying.”

Still, his connection to the brand remains strong. “When I see that compass rose logo, my heart still beats faster,” he admits. “I hope it lives forever.”

A New Horizon

Today, Jesper Rønnsgård is officially out of the charter business. He’s spending more time with his family and exploring new ventures. “It took me a year to emotionally detach from Navigare,” he says. “But now, I feel better than I have in years. What I miss most are the people—the ones who built the business with me, and everything we went through together.”

And though the helm has passed to others, Navigare’s course—from six boats in Poros to a seat at the top of a €100 million global enterprise—remains a case study in entrepreneurship, resilience, and the enduring pull of the sea.

BLUE SEA HOLDING

In 2021, PPF Group and Groupe Beneteau, the world’s leading leisure boat manufacturer, jointly acquired stakes in the global companies Dream Yacht Charter and Navigare Yachting with the aim of building a new global leader in the sailing yacht charter segment. At a time of decline in traditional international tourism, these acquisitions meet the growing demand for customised, sustainable leisure activities.

The investment combines the assets of Dream Yacht Charter, the segment leader, and Navigare Yachting, which is number four in the industry. Their total sales in 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic struck, exceeded EUR 200 million. PPF Group holds a 59 % stake and Groupe Beneteau a 41 % stake in the joint venture. Through this alliance, they are pooling together to cultivate a significant presence in the otherwise fragmented global sail boat charter market, which was worth EUR 1 billion annually prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Saskia Spethmann



“Yachting, sailing boat chartering, and leisure cruising are a globally growing industry and an exemplary pathway to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly leisure future.”

Loic Bonnet
CEO, Dream Yacht Charter





By Andrew Hanna, Ocean Partners International

FULL CIRCLE IN SANREMO – AND FORWARD AGAIN

A Charter Broker's Four-Decade Journey Through the MYBA Charter Show



I've been boat-mad since 1959. Long before I knew what a superyacht was, I was racing dinghies and dreaming of distant harbours. That passion eventually became my profession, and in 1988, I launched Hanna Desjardins International (later to become Ocean Partners International). Since then, I've arranged charters on everything from graceful sailing yachts to globe-crossing motor yachts, from the Med to the Caribbean and beyond.

But one constant has tied it all together: the MYBA Charter Show.

My first MYBA show was in 1989, in San Remo. Back then, the town was sun-bleached and easy going; the docks were alive with possibility. The yachts were modest compared to today's giants, but the sense of purpose and potential was enormous. We were a small, passionate crowd—brokers, captains, chefs—building something new. You could feel the industry taking shape beneath your feet.



In those early days, we London brokers flew into Nice and then transferred to San Remo. I used to take the train, preferably the InterCity, which arrived at San Remo Railway Station. Until I got to know the town, I used the famous guidebook 'Arthur Frommer's Europe on \$20 a Day' circa 1980. For many years I stayed over in a little pension run by a charming old lady. My budget was tight, but the food was great and she ironed my shirts!

The dress code was formal. For the gents, jackets and ties were the norm. It was said that American lady brokers had to consult with an appointed broker, who advised on show etiquette and strict dress codes. Frocks were in, flip-flop footwear and shorts were strictly not allowed. Some events (opening night) were black tie. The Casino in San Remo was the favourite venue for the formal opening night.

The must-go parties were on Princess Tanya or Rosenkavalier. Champagne flowed, cigars were fashionable and allowed onboard. Yachting Partners put on some great parties.

The '90s arrived; we had mobile phones and notebook PCs. My first MYBA charter agreements were photocopies of an original which a kind broker gave me.



Each charter agreement was completed on a typewriter. The Greek charter agreements were a nightmare; endless reams of carbon copy paper were needed.

Three original copies were sent to the client by courier and then to the owner. Sometimes it cost £400 just to get the paperwork completed and signed.

In the 2000s, the show moved to Genoa—a logical shift as yacht lengths expanded and so did our ambitions. Marina Molo Vecchio gave MYBA the space needed, and the show gained structure and scale. Iconic yachts like Perseus³, Axioma, and Silver Wind began appearing on the dock—names that redefined innovation and design. By then, we all had mobile phones and laptops, and business moved faster.

Barcelona came next, in 2017. One Ocean Port Vell brought a sleek, modern backdrop. The atmosphere turned sharply international and too far away for many yacht owners. I remember walking the docks and feeling the digital age sweep in: brokers on tablets, software platforms like Yachtfolio refining how we work. But the human side never left. I still rose early to board yachts before the bustle, to greet stewards and feel each vessel's heartbeat. Barcelona was simply not the same as San Remo or Genoa.



The pandemic grounded us in 2020 and 2021. The 2023 show was paused by MYBA for reflection. That time was used to rethink what the show needed to be, and where it should be held.

In 2024, we had a brief return to Genoa. It was a solid, transitional edition—with Carinthia VII, Aquila, and Lioness V making a powerful impression. But in 2025, everything changed again. We came home.

Back to Portosole Sanremo—the cradle of it all. It was the 35th edition of the MYBA Charter Show, and for me, it was emotional. I walked those same docks. I saw many new brokers take it in with fresh eyes. It was a full-circle moment. And yet, it didn't feel like the end of a chapter—it felt like a new beginning.

The 2025 show had it all: scale, style, and soul. Nero, Luna, Carinthia VII, and the brand-new Aqua Chiara dominated the quay. But it wasn't just about size or design—it was about energy. Conversations flowed like they used to. Espresso-fuelled chats turned into collaborations. I saw old colleagues reunited and new names welcomed. It reminded us why this industry still matters.

And now, it's official: Sanremo will host us again in 2026—and beyond. MYBA has signed a three-year agreement with PortoSole, extending through at least 2028.

After 41 years and 35 editions (pandemics and pauses included), the MYBA Show is not just surviving—it's thriving. It's leaning into the future with smarter systems, stronger partnerships, and a renewed commitment to sustainability, training, and excellence.

As Raphael Sauleau of MYBA put it, “The MYBA Charter Show is more than just an event. It is a reflection of our industry’s values: professionalism, collaboration, and excellence.” I couldn’t agree more.



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By Tino Prosenik

Marina & Superyacht
Industry Expert

OSCAR SICHES

A Life Steered by the Sea

To most, a marina is a place to park boats. To Oscar Siches, it's a living, evolving ecosystem—a place that blends culture, commerce, community and craftsmanship. Over the past four decades, Siches has quietly but powerfully reshaped how we think about marinas, not just as infrastructure, but as experiences. His story charts a path from the regatta circuits of Argentina to the glittering quays of Dubai, Singapore, and Palma de Mallorca.



Born in Buenos Aires in 1954, Oscar was on the water from the age of six. “I learned sailing before I knew how to ride a bike,” he recalls. At thirteen, he joined a naval academy, becoming the skipper of its regatta team before he was even legally allowed to command a boat. Sailing wasn't just a sport—it was a language he was fluent in from the very beginning.

After a stint as a professional skipper, including transatlantic voyages and racing, Oscar transitioned to technical roles in yacht systems and electronics. That detour would eventually lay the foundation for his marina career. “We wanted to start a family, so we moved to the Netherlands,” he says, where he installed electronics on superyachts and learned how ports and systems worked from the inside out. In the late '90s, he returned to Spain—this time to Mallorca—as technical manager of a marina company. It wasn't long before he co-founded his own.

What followed was a twenty-year immersion in marina development and operations. As technical manager and co-owner of two high-profile marinas in Palma, including the now-iconic Moll Vell, Oscar pushed boundaries. He introduced early eco-friendly practices, installed first-generation marina WiFi, and helped reimagine ports

as welcoming, civic-friendly spaces. “You don't build a marina just for boats,” he says. “You build it for people—residents, visitors, crew, the whole community.”

Oscar's philosophy is unapologetically human-centric. His interview is peppered with thoughts on gate noise (“no squeaking, no banging”), garbage truck routes, and the sociological logic of separating charter and residential berths. Every detail, from security to ambience, reflects his belief that marinas must balance operational efficiency with emotional comfort. “People come to marinas for peace or for joy—not for inconvenience.”

In 2016, Siches transitioned fully into consultancy, a shift that has taken him around the world—from designing the Marasi Bay Marina in Dubai to advising in Greece, Singapore, and Australia. He's a familiar face at global conferences, invited not just for his technical prowess but for his clear, practical philosophy. He speaks like a seafarer with an engineer's brain and a hotelier's heart.

Despite a global presence, Oscar's compass always points back to Mallorca. “This is home,” he says without hesitation. He now splits his time between consulting projects and family life, careful not to overbook himself. “Three jobs is too much—I want to sleep, see my family, and enjoy life.”

His legacy isn't in skyscrapers or luxury flagships, but in the subtle art of shaping marinas that work—really work—for those who use them. With accolades including ICOMIA's Golden Cleat Award and multiple roles on international advisory boards, Siches remains one of the industry's most quietly influential figures.



“Marinas aren't just parking lots for yachts,” he insists. “They're places of connection—between land and sea, locals and visitors, peace and pleasure. If I've done my job well, you won't even notice the design. You'll just feel good being there.”

From a six-year-old sailor to a world-renowned marina designer, Oscar Siches has spent a lifetime crafting not just spaces, but stories—anchored by care, built for people, and forever shaped by the sea.



By Suzy Rayment/Asia-Pacific Superyacht Association

Southeast Asia Shines for Charter Clients



Simon Spring / Unsplash

Asia and charter are a match made in heaven. The Asia-Pacific superyacht charter market is experiencing a surge in popularity, fuelled by increased wealth in the region, and a desire for unique travel experiences. Countries in Southeast Asia such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are able to offer new adventures for charter guests who are attracted by the diverse landscapes, vibrant cultures, and remote locations.

Chartering in Asia has traditionally focused on corporate entertainment, and the local day charters market, with only a fraction of the potential of international charter clients being engaged. Peter Lürssen (Lürssen Shipyard) and Rose Damen (Damen Yachting) have both experienced first-hand the delights of cruising in Indonesia, and are advocates for the region which has vast and has infinite cruising opportunities. One of the key ways to develop the luxury charter in Asia would be to focus on offering “full package” destinations, similar to those that have been established for European and Caribbean markets.

One of the early international charter operators in Indonesia was Silolona Sojourns set up by Patty Seery, the legendary owner of Silolona which was a traditional 50m Indonesia Phinisi sailing vessel she had built by the Konjo boat builders of Sulawesi to Lloyd’s class specifications. Silolona was the gold standard offering 5-star service, and authentic cultural experiences. Over the last 20 years the Phinisi charter fleet has grown substantially and companies are now offering charters at a variety of price points and in several locations in Indonesia.

Other opportunity that helps grow Asia’s charter fleet comes from the growing numbers of superyachts which are owned by Asians. Gordon Fernandes, CEO and Founder of Asia Pacific Superyachts, a yacht management company based in Phuket with 12 regional offices in Asia explains, “The new Thailand superyacht charter license means that locally based and international superyachts can operate charters in the region, and with the improvements to local marinas and shipyard facilities, this will make it easier for superyachts to be based in the region.”

While the vastness of the Asia-Pacific region was once a deterrent, improved infrastructure and promotion are making it more accessible to the superyacht charter community. With the expansive archipelagos of Indonesia and Philippines which offer incredible biodiversity, remote islands, and unique cultural experiences, charter guests seeking adventure and exploration can access Asia’s cruising grounds all year round.



Poised for significant growth, the Asia-Pacific yachting market is driven by a combination of increased accessibility, a growing Asian yacht ownership base, and a desire for unique cruising experiences. While challenges do remain, the region is actively working to overcome them and capitalize on the growing charter opportunities for these amazing superyacht cruising grounds.

Phuket, THAILAND

“Phuket is a perennial favourite with its crystal-clear waters, delicious food, vibrant towns, lively night markets, indulgent spas, and the incredibly warm hospitality make it the perfect charter destination. Guests can explore more of the islands from a yacht and access remote islands from a yacht while keeping away from the crowds.

Islands such as Koh Lipe, Koh Rok Noi, Koh Muk, Koh Lanta and Koh Phi Phi are popular but it's the famous Phang Nga Bay, with its limestone Khats that create the real wow factor for charter guests.

Phuket offers “world-class golf courses” including Blue Canyon Golf Club and Mission Hills Golf Club, when this is combined with luxury resorts such as the Amanpuri, Trisara, Six Senses, and Anantara Layan there is plenty of activities to engage guests. Phuket Yacht Haven is a Superyacht Ready accredited marina, and the new private jet terminal means that the needs of the superyacht owner are well catered for.



Erik Karits / Unsplash



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Raja Ampat, INDONESIA

One of the top yacht charter destinations in Indonesia is Raja Ampat, which is known to be one of the most biodiverse marine ecosystems on the planet, with over 1,200 species of fish and 550 species of coral. Komodo National Park is another charter favourite and the epicentre for wildlife activities and where the Komodo dragon can be found. It has in excess of 100 dive sites, that are comprised mainly of volcanic sea-mounts, pinnacles, walls, canyons and fringing reefs. Andy Shorten, the Founder of The Lighthouse Consultancy, a Bali based yacht management company with over 28 years of experience in the regions says, "it would take years to cover all the cruising grounds available in Indonesia, but there are some key locations that guests love to visit that include; the Banda Spice islands, Cendrawasih Bay, North Sulawesi and West Sumatra. Popular activities include hiking, fishing, birdwatching, and swimming with manta rays, sharks, whale sharks, dolphins and turtles and even the rare dugong or sea cow which is occasionally spotted in the scattered mangrove forests.



Ramzi Bezzoudji / Unsplash

Langkawi, MALAYSIA

The Langkawi archipelago, situated off the coast of northern Malaysia, is a hidden gem, and makes for one of the best yacht charter destinations for nature lovers. The collection of 99 idyllic islands is home to a UNESCO-certified World Geopark, where travellers can take in incredible scenery – from million-year-old karst formations to mysterious mangroves. The rainforest-coated region is also abundant in wildlife, with guaranteed sightings of eagles, hornbills, kingfishers, dusky leaf and macaque monkeys, monitor lizards, and vibrant butterflies. The Royal Langkawi Yacht Club accommodates superyachts in the marina, and Langkawi is a duty free port where superyachts can provision and refuel.



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- ✓ Deposit up to 20.000 Euro
- ✓ Hotel costs insurable
- ✓ Duration from 1 to 60 days



By Ben Taylor

CHOOSING THE RIGHT EVENT

Across the charter industry, participation in trade shows and international events is not just expected—it's essential. From Cannes to Monaco, MYBA to METSTRATE, presence on the floor signals relevance. However, for many charter professionals, the question remains: Are these events really paying off?

Ben Taylor thinks we can do better.

As a marketing content strategist and reporter within the marine industry and superyacht space, Taylor attends upwards of 25 industry events annually. Through his "What's Going On Project," he profiles the industry by conducting interviews with stakeholders. They discuss hot topics such as sustainability, electrification, and tech across the sector.

'Maybe that wasn't quite as successful as we anticipated' are often times thoughts going through our minds. Taylor wants to help improve that by providing a framework you can follow and implement at your next event, and hopefully for many years to come.

Here's his framework—a practical, two-phase guide to transform your event participation from reactive to results-driven.

PHASE ONE: Pre-Event Planning

1. STRATEGIC POSITIONING: Choosing the right event is crucial. Some events are highly respected and valuable, while others are not. Every time you attend an event, you associate your brand with it, sharing their audience and creating an affinity.

A poorly chosen event can impact your brand and limit your results. Evaluate the event's reputation, gather testimonials, and have open conversations with peers. Assess the event's audience—are they local, national, or international? Make sure the event aligns with your target market.

It's also worth exploring sectors beyond the boating industry. For instance, the luxury automotive and real estate markets often attract the same clientele as yacht chartering. Taking a broader perspective can help uncover new business opportunities.

2. PARTNERSHIPS: Partnerships can take various forms, from sharing resources to collaborating on mutual goals. Start small and simple, such as sharing a stand with a complementary business. Be clear about expectations and agreements—always get them in writing to avoid misunderstandings.

3. CONTENT: Your content should reflect your brand and service. For aspirational luxury services, invest in high-quality video content showcasing the lifestyle you offer. For more advisory services, simple, authentic videos from your brokers can be just as effective. Plan your content creation thoroughly to avoid last-minute scrambles during the event.

4. TARGETED ENGAGEMENT: Be specific about your target audience at the event. Identify key demographics and focus your efforts on engaging with the most relevant attendees.

PHASE TWO: Execution and Follow-Up

5. PRE-EVENT HYPE: Build awareness well in advance through multiple channels. Regular social media posts, email footers, and newsletters help maintain a consistent presence.

6. DATA CAPTURE AND INTERACTION: Capturing attendee data is critical. Collect names, emails, and

other relevant details through appointment forms or registration systems.

This information helps tailor your follow-up communications and improve future interactions.

7. EXPERIENCE DESIGN: Create compelling experiences that justify data capture.

Whether it's offering a vessel tour, a VR experience, or simply a glass of champagne, ensure there's a clear value exchange for the attendee's information.

8. RAPID RESPONSE FUNNEL: Have a system in place for post-event follow-up. Integrate captured data into your CRM to streamline communication and sales processes.

GDPR Considerations: Ensure your data capture practices comply with GDPR. Opt-ins must be clear and explicit, particularly when using data for marketing purposes.

Conclusion: Random efforts yield random results. Strategic planning and organization lead to predictable outcomes. Follow this framework consistently to achieve successful event marketing.



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INTERNATIONAL CHARTER EXPO

13-15 NOVEMBER, 2024, AMSTERDAM

ICE'24 showcased a broad spectrum of yacht charter offerings: bareboat and superyacht charter – a worldwide offer of sailboats and catamarans, alongside crewed gulets and luxury yachts. Participants included 200+ fleet operators, central agencies and owners, meeting the 200+ charter brokers.

After 12 years of its existence, this event is confirming its positioning as the global meeting point for charter companies from around the world: from the cradle of yacht charter – Europe, to all the new exotic sailing destinations like South East Asia, Galapagos, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Seychelles, Brazil.

The yacht charter industry is governed and propelled by companies in Greece, Croatia, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Caribbean etc., but the international collaboration is what made the growth of this industry so persistent.



ICE is the best event that has been held in the charter business for many years. I participate every year and it is the only opportunity to meet most of the partners in one place. Thanks to the ICE team for what you do.

Petra from YACHT-Ingen (Czech Republic)

Efficient B2B Networking

What sets ICE apart is its laser focus on business outcomes. No access to the public – the expo prioritizes serious, B2B C-level representatives to maintain a high caliber networking environment. With introduction of an Investors Lounge, ICE enabled charter companies to present investment and management offerings to interested backers. A cornerstone of ICE has been its digital-first approach to networking. The proprietary Handshake 2.0 app allowed meetings to be scheduled already from a month in advance, optimizing attendees' schedules.



Superyacht & Bareboat

Regardless of ICE starting as a bareboat yacht charter expo over a decade ago, today it has become the meeting point and unity of all yacht charter sectors, including superyacht charter.

With the premiere of the Superyacht Village in Amsterdam, in 2025, ICE promises to be more dynamic than ever, thanks to a €100,000 sponsorship by Ankor Software, which subsidizes 50% of participation costs for first-time exhibitors on ICE'25. The initiative is designed to encourage broader participation of superyacht charter companies and brokers.



ICE'24 was a fantastic experience for us. It marked our first time participating, and we were proud to represent the only fleet operator from Indonesia and Thailand. The event provided an unparalleled platform to showcase our unique offerings, connect with industry leaders, and explore new opportunities. The professional yet welcoming atmosphere, coupled with the well-organized scheduling through the Handshake app, made it incredibly productive for our business. We look forward to returning next year and continuing to grow our presence in the international yachting community.

Maria from Asia Global Yachting (Indonesia & Thailand).





Exhibiting at ICE for the first time was a fantastic experience for Ocean Voyager! Representing Sri Lanka and the niche day charter market, we were impressed by the expo's innovative speed-dating format and the seamless Handshake app. The organization was flawless, making it an excellent platform for building connections. We can't wait for next year!

Margaux from Ocean Voyager International (Sri Lanka).



ICE has been instrumental into the growth of our business. Networking opportunities have been an asset. For us a must every year!

Francesco from YAL'OOU (Greece)



One of the most important expos in the industry, with a well-organized and structured approach. Even in the age of technology, face-to-face communication with the people we work with makes a significant difference. We have been participating since the establishment of our company, and we believe it has greatly contributed to our growth.

Begum from Sail On Yachting (Turkey).



Attending the ICE for the first time was a fantastic experience for us. ICE proved to be an essential gathering for professionals in the industry, offering opportunities to connect with key players and discover new business opportunities. We were particularly impressed by the level of organization, the quality of the exhibitors, and the networking opportunities provided by ICE. It's clear that this expo is a must-attend event for anyone in the industry. We're already looking forward to the next edition!

Alvaro Garcia from Sailwiz (Spain).



New dates:
November 12-14, 2025.

Same location:
EXPO Greater Amsterdam, Netherlands



Innovative approach for meetings set up with Handshake app. My third ICE experience was unforgettable! Having partners from all around the world in one place is a Broker's dream! Congratulations ICE Team for another fantastic event you created!

Aleksandra from Boataround (Slovakia).

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Charter Meetup Returns for Its 6th Edition in Greece and Italy



CHARTER MEETUP SICILY

From April 9 to 11, the stunning Capo d'Orlando Marina in Sicily hosted 20 Italian fleet operators and suppliers, along with 15 international charter brokers, for networking and presentations on Sicily as a sailing destination, while exploring various charter bases and marinas in northern Sicily.

Over 50 yachts were presented which included 20 monohulls and over 30 catamarans. The biggest number of catamarans were Bali and Lagoon catamarans. In total, there were over 100 speed meetings held, each lasting 12 minutes so fleet operators, charter brokers and suppliers could present their business to each other very efficiently.

Recap of the event in Sicily:

1. WELCOME RECEPTION

Participants settled into their charter yacht cabins and got together for a welcome reception at the Sestante Marina Motel, Capo d'Orlando. With stunning views of the marina, good music, catering, and a few drinks, Charter Meetup has created the perfect atmosphere for a great start to a three-day conference.

CHARTER MEETUP LEFKAS

From April 23 to 26, Lefkas welcomed 27 Greek fleet operators, 20 charter broker companies, and 5 suppliers for networking and presentations on Greek sailing areas, while exploring various charter bases and marinas in the Ionian Sea.

Brokers had the chance to see in person more than 250 yachts during the organized marina tours to the charter bases. In three days 675 meetings were held, each lasting 10 minutes so fleet operators, charter brokers and suppliers could present their business to each other very efficiently.

Recap of the event in Lefkas:

1. WELCOME RECEPTION

Hotel Lefkada welcomed participants and set a positive tone for the event with local drinks and traditional food.



2. FLEET OPERATOR'S PRESENTATIONS



Experienced Italian fleet operators presented all there is to know about sailing conditions in Sicily, Sardinia, the Amalfi Coast, Elba Island, and the Aeolian Islands. Topics included: the main charter bases, high season buoy prices, sailing area recommendations, sailing season, and meteorology.

International brokers had the chance to see the whole perspective of sailing in Italy and to learn more about each charter company.

After these insightful presentations, Ankor Software gave a clear and helpful presentation, showing how their service works and how it can benefit the participants.



3. B2B SPEED DATE MEETINGS

Brokers met with local Italian fleet operators in quick 12-minute talks, moving from table to table and getting to know everyone. Topics included bases, boats, services, insurance, trip plans, and more. It was a great way to learn, ask questions and build strong connections for the season ahead.



2. FLEET OPERATOR'S PRESENTATIONS

Greek sailing area presentations by fleet operators provided brokers with suggested itineraries and practical tips for their guests.

Fleet operators explained the Ionian Islands & Epirus Coast, Attica & Saronic Gulf, Sporades Islands, Volos & North Aegean Coast, Dodecanese & East Aegean Islands, as well as the Cyclades Islands.

MMK – Booking Manager System also held a detailed presentation with a focus on industry trends based on data acquired through their booking system.



3. B2B SPEED DATE MEETINGS

Exactly 10 minutes to introduce themselves to one another and make valuable connections. This was the most energetic part of the event that gave all exhibiting companies valuable opportunities to take their business to the next level.

On the first day, there were 7 meeting slots, whilst on the second day 20 meeting slots per company.

4. MARINA TOURS

During organised visits to Marina Portorosa and Marina Capo d'Orlando, brokers and suppliers were welcomed on board by local charter companies.

Seeing over 50 boats up close, meeting the teams, and getting a feel for what each charter offers made all the difference. This was the perfect way to bring the whole idea together and give everyone a clear and complete picture of what to expect – a great way to highlight the full experience.



5. DINNER SPONSORED BY SEALOGY

As the sun set behind the decks of the yachts in Marina Capo D'Orlando, participants gathered at the Sestante Marina Motel for an Italian dinner with a view. The dinner of traditional Italian specialities was kindly sponsored by Sealogy.

6. PROMO SAILING WEEK

Why not experience sailing in Sicily first-hand? Italian charters each offered a promo week for international brokers to charter a boat for free. Some used it to have an early family vacation, while others organised a business trip to learn about the local charter services around Sicily.



4. MARINA TOURS

On the first day, the brokers were taken to a new and strategic charter base in Palairos to see yachts.

The second stop was Preveza Marina and Preveza Main Port, where charter companies showed off their bareboat & crewed monohulls and catamarans.

During the last day of the Charter meetup, there was an organised tour in Lefkas – Lefkas Main Port & Lefkas Marina. The marina tours lasted more than 11 hours in total!

5. DINNER SPONSORED BY SEALOGY

Last but not least, the Charter Meetup ended with a Goodbye Dinner sponsored by Sealogy in Remezzo Restaurant in the Lefkas Marina.



6. PROMO SAILING WEEK

Charter brokers attending the Charter Meetup in Greece had a chance to charter a yacht from our attending fleet operators. From Saturday, April 26 to May 2, attending brokers set sail with friends and family through the Greek seas. Promo sailing week is a great way for brokers to experience firsthand how fleet operators perform their business and to learn about the Greek sailing areas. Understanding the service they offer to clients is the first step toward becoming a better charter broker.

09:27 95

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| ● ADARA | ● ELLY | ● OCEAN LOUNGE | ● VALIUM 62 | ● CAPRICORN I | ● SOFIA D |
| ● AETHER | ● ELVIRA 52 | ● ONEIDA | ● VALIUM 67 | ● CARTE BLANCHE | ● SOFIA Y. |
| ● ALEXANDRA II | ● ENTRE CIELOS | ● ONEIDA 2 | ● VERINA STAR | ● COOKIE | ● STARLIGHT |
| ● ALOIA 80 | ● ESPERANCE | ● PEARLY GATES | ● WHITE CAPS | ● EL MARITA | ● SUMMER CAMP |
| ● ALTEYA | ● FORTUNE ONE | ● PI2 | ● WINDSEA | ● EL PECADO | ● SYMPATICO |
| ● AMANTE | ● GENNY | ● PIXIE | ● WORLD'S END | ● ELEGANT | ● THIS IS MINE |
| ● ANDARE AVANTI | ● GRAYONE | ● POSEIRA | ● ADARA NEXT | ● FLOW | ● YALOOU DREAM |
| ● ANDIAMO | ● HANII | ● SAHANA | ● KIMATA | ● GRACE | ● ZEUS |
| ● ASTORIA | ● HAPPY | ● SAMARA | ● ADEL | ● IRENE | ● OMNIA |
| ● AURELIA | ● HONEYMOON | ● SERENISSIMA | ● ALFA | ● LA FENICE | ● MYTHOS G |
| ● BARON | ● HYDRUS | ● SERENISSIMA III | ● ALICE | ● LIFE TIME | ● GALAXY |
| ● CHRISTAL MIO | ● JEWEL | ● STEPHANIE | ● ALKYONE | ● LINDA II | ● MOONDANCE |
| ● COSMOS | ● KOS 58.Cat | ● SUNMOON | ● ANDROMEDA | ● MAMMA'S | |

EMMYS 2025: A REMARKABLE SHOWCASE OF YACHTING EXCELLENCE

From April 29 to May 2, 2025, the island of Poros once again became a vibrant meeting point for the global yachting community, hosting the 21st edition of the East Med Multihull & Yacht Charter Show (EMMYS). With 106 crewed yachts on display—from luxurious motor yachts to catamarans and elegant sailing vessels—the event showcased the best of Greek chartering to over 2,500 visitors and 265 brokers from around the world.

Beyond the yachts, EMMYS 2025 offered a full program of parallel events that highlighted the depth and diversity of the industry. The Chefs' Competition with acclaimed culinary judges, the CYBA Designer Water Contest, and the Best Crew Awards, while art and sustainability took center stage with Elena Kos' exhibition "The Sea Remembers Us" and the panel talk "Protecting the Seas We Love" by Sustainable Sailing Greece. Innovation was also in focus, with wellness and technology presentations by Bayz Spa and Ankor Software. Each day concluded with lively receptions and dockside gatherings - a reminder that people are at the heart of this industry.

With its nautical charm and warm local support, Poros once again proved to be the ideal host for an event that blends professionalism, hospitality, and a deep love for the sea.

EMMYS 2025 was held under the auspices of leading national and regional institutions, and with the support of new and loyal sponsors. Above all, EMMYS 2025 highlighted the momentum of an industry that is evolving - powered by people who care deeply about quality, innovation, and the journey ahead. The show returns to Poros next year, from May 7 to 10, 2026, continuing its role as a key meeting point for the global yachting community.

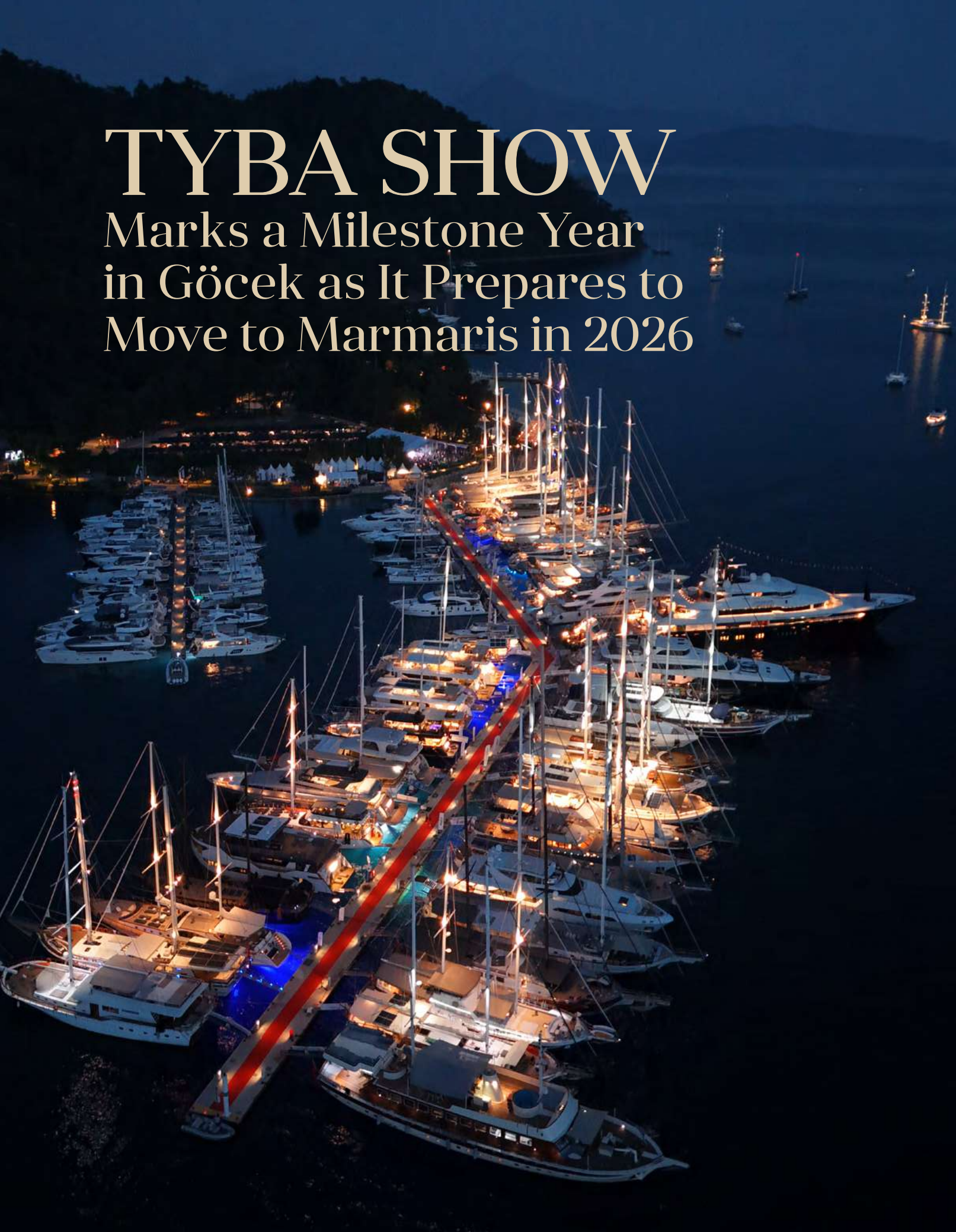


22nd East Med Multihull Yacht Charter Show
7-10 MAY 2026, Poros Island, Greece



TYBA SHOW

Marks a Milestone Year in Göcek as It Prepares to Move to Marmaris in 2026



The 6th TYBA Yacht Charter Show, organized by TYBA (All Yacht Operators, Brokers and Agents Association of Türkiye), concluded with remarkable success in Göcek between May 9–13, 2025. The show reached a new milestone, welcoming over 500 attendees from 23 countries, including international and local brokers, central agents, exhibitors, and members of the press.



TYBA Vice President and Show Committee Chairman Noyan Mutlugil emphasized that the event is more than a display of Turkish commercial yachting—it serves as an essential platform for industry collaboration.

Beyond the yachts, the show offered a full agenda of professional and social programming: seminars, industry panels, press lunches, and onboard networking receptions. Topics ranged from the history of yacht construction to marketing, music licensing, and

wine heritage. Informal dockside gatherings and evening parties provided brokers and crew a chance to connect in a relaxed, beautiful setting of Göcek.

As the TYBA Show prepares to relocate to Marmaris in 2026, organizers emphasized their goal of highlighting different charter regions of Türkiye with each edition. Starting in Yalıkavak, continuing in Göcek, and soon in Marmaris, the show acts as a traveling spotlight on the country's diverse and picturesque cruising grounds. This year's event featured an exceptional lineup of 50 luxury yachts, ranging from 20 to 82 meters, featuring the spectacular 82-meter Alfa Nero, crafted by Oceanco, which raised the bar for TYBA's expanding reputation.

During the opening ceremony, TYBA President Serhan Cengiz emphasized that the TYBA Yacht Charter Show serves as the leading platform for presenting Türkiye's yacht industry to the world.





The competitive spirit of the show was on full display through a variety of contests. This year's Chefs' Competition, themed "Istanbul Street Food with a Creative Twist," was judged by an esteemed panel including CNN's Richard Quest. Other awards included Best Table Setup, Best Cocktail, Most Welcoming Crew, and the debut of the CYBA Designer Water Competition.



THE WINNERS:

Best Chef Over 35m: PRINCESS MELDA

Best Chef Under 35m: GOOD LIFE

Best Table Setup: BABYLON

Best Cocktail: YAZZ

Designer Water Competition: TANWAY



LET'S MEET

7TH TYBA YACHT CHARTER SHOW

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Save the date CANNES YACHTING FESTIVAL 48th EDITION

From 9 to 14 September, the Cannes Yachting Festival returns for its 48th edition. As Europe's largest in-water boat show and the opening event of the nautical season, the Festival once again brings together the leading players in international yachting, set against the exceptional backdrop of the Côte d'Azur."



In 2024, the event welcomed 55,000 visitors from around the world, reflecting its strong international reach and appeal. For 2025, more than 600 exhibitors will present 700 boats from 5 to 50 metres, including sailing and motor yachts, monohulls and multihulls, as well as a growing number of electric and hybrid propulsion models.

The Festival is structured across two key sites, each dedicated to a specific offer to make the visit easier and more efficient:

- The Vieux Port showcases motorboats from 12 to 45 metres.
- The Port Canto features three areas:
- The Sailing Area, with 120 new sailboats over 10 metres,
- The Power Boat Marina, for motorboats up to 12 metres,
- The Yacht Brokerage & Toys zone, dedicated to pre-owned large yachts and nautical toys.

This clear organisation improves the overall visitor experience, ensuring a continuous circuit and easy navigation between the different categories of boats and services. The two ports are linked by enhanced sea shuttle services, and the main entrances have been redesigned for smoother access.

The Innovation Route, introduced to highlight the sector's most promising solutions, returns this year to spotlight advances in eco-design, alternative engines,



© Cyril Charpin - CYF 2024

sustainable materials and connected technologies. Exhibitors along this route benefit from dedicated signage and targeted communication, making it easier for visitors to identify the most forward-thinking offerings on display.

Sustainability continues to be an important focus for the Cannes Yachting Festival. In 2025, we are planning to reinforce our Innovation Route, which highlights the technological and eco-friendly innovations in the industry making the biggest impact. This dedicated path brings together forward-thinking projects related

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to decarbonisation, alternative propulsion, waste management, eco-design, and new materials such as recyclable composites and resins.

Through dedicated signage around the show, the Innovation Route makes it easy for visitors to identify sustainable solutions and innovations driving the future of yachting.

The goal is threefold: to give visibility to exhibitors who are rethinking design for improved efficiency, aerodynamics, and connectivity, to invite visitors to discover the technological and ecological advances in the industry, and finally to support its transition towards more responsible practices. As nearly 80% of current innovations in the sector relate to “green” technologies, the Cannes Yachting Festival is proud to put the spotlight on this momentum and contribute to shaping a more sustainable future for the industry.

This year, the boat show will exhibit many electric and hybrid boats. Among the expected premieres, the Sirena 48 Hybrid, from Turkish boat builders Sirena Marine, stands out as a significant step forward in combining comfort



and performance with more responsible energy use.

Also worth noting is the Seadeck 6 from Azimut Yachts—part of the brand’s new line that places strong emphasis on hybrid propulsion, lightweight construction, and onboard technologies aimed at reducing emissions.

The VF 82-03 by VisionF Yachts and the Millikan M.10 are also part of this new wave of eco-conscious models that place innovation and sustainability at the heart of their concept.

In sailing, engine propulsion is also evolving. For example, the catamaran manufacturer Excess has introduced its first hybrid model—one the sailing world is clearly eager to see.

In a context where the yachting industry is undergoing major transformation, the Cannes Yachting Festival continues to play a strategic role. It acts as both a launchpad for world premieres and a meeting place where professionals come together to shape the future of the sector.

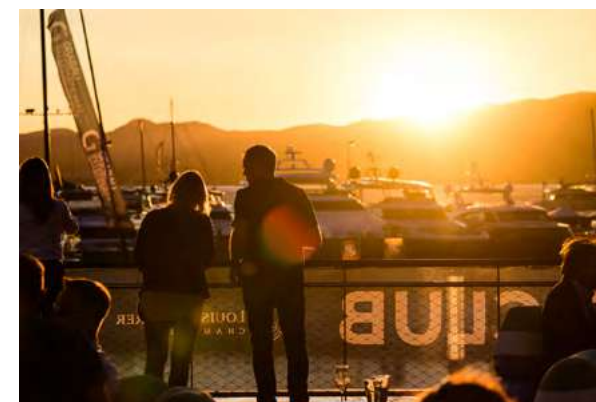
KELAGOPIAN - RX France



KELAGOPIAN - RX France

“For this new edition, our mission remains the same,” says Sylvie Ernoult, Director of the Festival. “To offer the industry an exceptional backdrop in which any actor can showcase new products, meet clients, and kick off the season. The strength of our offer, the quality of our visitors and the commitment of our exhibitors are the foundation of our success. In the current economic and geopolitical context, the Festival continues to support the sector and highlight its excellence.”

Sailing or motor, monohull or multihull, electric, hybrid or traditional engines – the Cannes Yachting Festival offers a comprehensive overview of the industry’s latest innovations and trends, making it an unmissable date on the international boating calendar.



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KEY INFORMATION

- Dates: 8–13 September 2026
- Location: Vieux Port & Port Canto, Cannes
- Opening Hours:
Tuesday – Thursday: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Friday (late night): 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Website: www.cannesyachtingfestival.com



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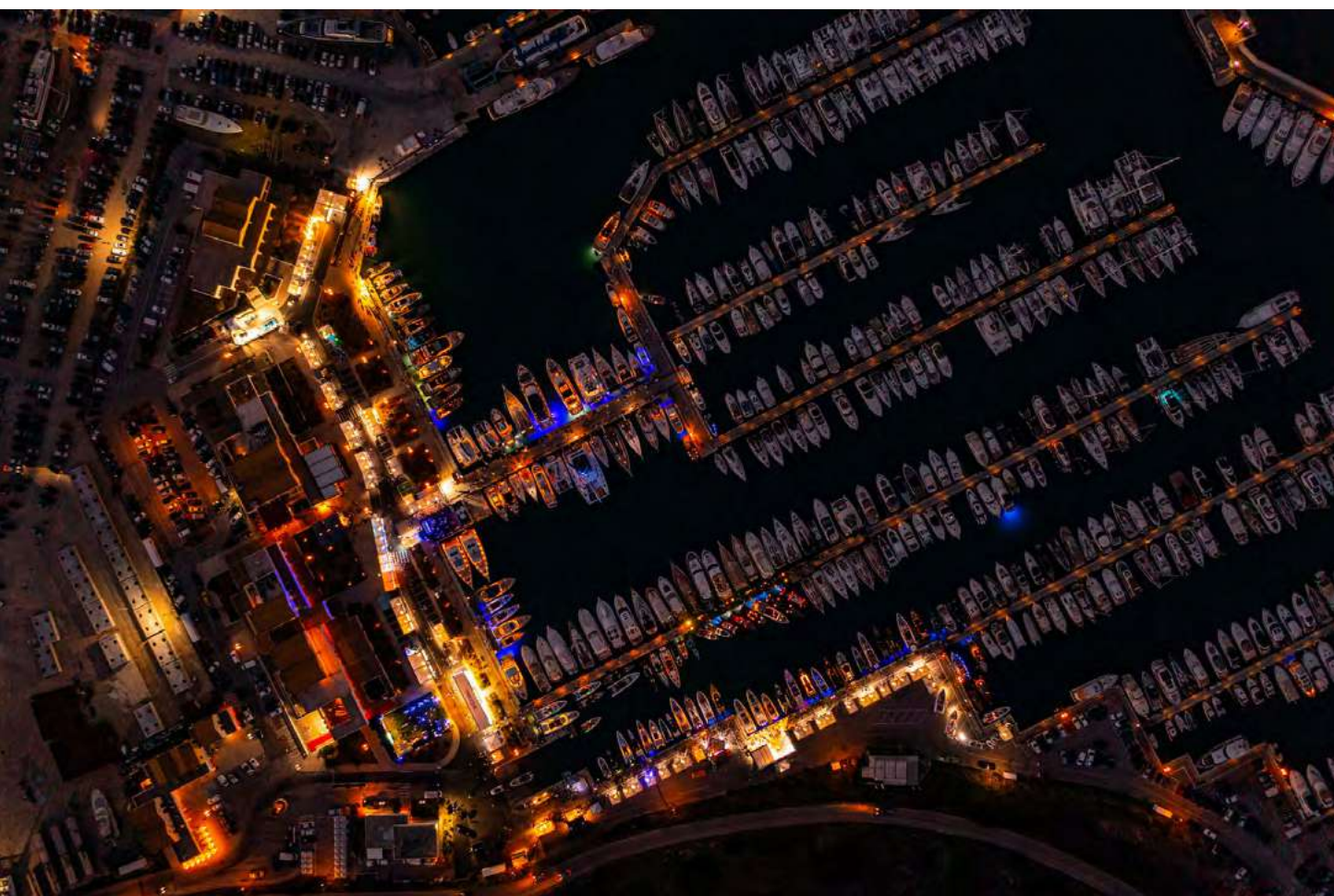
OLYMPIC YACHT SHOW 2025

Once again, the heart of yachting
will beat at Olympic Marine from
8 to 12 October 2025

Returning with renewed momentum this October, the Olympic Yacht Show 2025 reaffirms its position as the leading meeting platform for the yachting industry in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Held at the impressive and meticulously organised venue of Olympic Marine in Lavrio, the event will offer visitors the opportunity to explore—both on and off the water—the present and future of marine excellence and luxury.

With strong participation from leading Greek and international shipyards, the Show highlights the quality, innovation, and design that define modern yachting. At the same time, it provides an ideal setting for networking and B2B meetings, attracting renowned brands and manufacturers who will be present both on land and at sea. The exhibition will once again host national, European, and global premieres of yachts that are set to capture the spotlight.



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in the water—from all categories including motor and sailing yachts, catamarans, dayboats, performance boats, and RIBs.

As Mr. Gerasimos Gerolymatos, founder and Head of the Olympic Yacht Show Organising Committee, stated:

“The continuously growing demand shows us that each year the Show will exceed itself, breaking new records in attendance and participation. It promotes marine tourism while also adding value to our country.”

www.olympicyachtshow.gr

Following the successful 4th edition of the Olympic Yacht Show, EKO continues its support as Grand Sponsor, underlining its expertise in the Leisure Marine sector and in lubricants designed specifically for yachts and recreational craft.

Greece’s premier in-water yacht show, successfully organised by ONDECK EVENTS since 2021, has rightfully earned its place on the international calendar of major yacht events. It remains the only exhibition in the country with a clear focus on medium and large yacht categories, showcasing new models for sale in the premium segment.

Last year’s edition attracted 20,000 visitors, who had the opportunity to admire more than 130 yachts on display



5th OLYMPIC YACHT SHOW

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ENTER THE NEW ERA OF YACHT CHARTER!



Icebreaker speaks with **Martina Hršak**, COO of MMK Systems and organizer of the Booking Manager Summit.

BOOKING MANAGER SUMMIT: Shaping the Future of the Yacht Charter Industry



You're getting ready for the 7th edition of the Booking Manager Summit. But let's rewind, how did the whole idea start?

When you've been at the core of an industry for over 20 years, like the Booking Manager Systems has been for yacht charter, you start to notice patterns. As the leading B2B booking platform and all-in-one back office solution, we're in daily contact with thousands of fleet operators, agencies, and brokers. They trust us, not just with their operations, but with their growth. We'd often hear the same questions: *How do we sell more? What's the right marketing strategy? How can we make our business future-proof?* And while we're experts in digital solutions, we realized that these questions required a broader scope. So we thought, why not bring in world-class experts to help answer them? That's how the Summit was born, a space where global industry leaders could share insights, strategies, and solutions that would benefit the entire charter community.



For those who haven't attended before, how would you describe the Booking Manager Summit experience?

The yacht charter world has its fair share of events. ICE, of course, stands out as the top-tier B2B networking event for our sector. But we saw a need for something different. The Booking Manager Summit is about **education and strategy**. It's designed for companies who want to think differently, move smarter, and stay ahead. Here, we tackle everything from emerging customer behavior and marketing innovation to increasing conversions, finding your unique value, and making chartering more sustainable. It's about growth, both personal and professional. Attendees leave the Summit not just inspired, but equipped.



So what does that look like in action? What can attendees expect from those three days in Zagreb?

From **December 10th to 12th, the Hilton Garden Inn in Zagreb** transforms into the industry's innovation hub. Over **300 leaders** from around the world come together for an energetic mix of more than **60 sessions** spread across three stages. It's fast-paced, hands-on, and packed with value. We've created a space where experts don't just lecture - they engage. Whether it's a focused workshop, a provocative panel, or a insightful lecture, the goal is always the same: to give attendees clear, actionable takeaways they can implement as soon as they're back at their base. And it's not just about learning. We've thought about every detail, from scheduled coffee breaks and catered lunches to lively parties, raffles, gift bags, and networking galore. And for those who want to revisit the Summit later, all sessions and materials are available for a full year in the exclusive **Summit app**.



It's the 7th edition, can returning attendees expect anything new this year?

Absolutely. In fact, we're shaking things up in a big way for BMS25. This year, we're moving away from long keynote speeches and leaning heavily into workshops. We believe in speed learning, the kind that sticks, and workshops give people the chance to absorb and apply ideas right away. For deeper, more nuanced topics like digitalization or destination marketing, we're turning to panel discussions. This format allows for more points of view, richer perspectives, and a better understanding of the complexity behind the challenges we face. And of course, we're keeping a few surprises up our sleeve. Let's just say: if you think you know what to expect, think again. Or even better, reserve your spot now and find out for yourselves!



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LIVEABOARDS IN THE MALDIVES

A Conversation with Donatella Telli,
Founder of Luxury Yacht Maldives

■ For those unfamiliar, what exactly is a liveaboard, and how does it differ from a traditional yacht charter?

A liveaboard is a boat where guests stay for several days—essentially a floating hotel. The experience is immersive and often centered around activities like diving, island exploration, and snorkeling. Unlike charters, which offer personalized routes and flexible schedules, liveaboards follow semi-fixed itineraries designed for continuous exploration. Everything is included: accommodation, meals, excursions, and crew. It's ideal for those who want to stay close to the ocean without returning to land each night.

■ How did you start operating liveaboards, and why the Maldives?

I have an educational background in tourism and was already a certified scuba diving instructor, so the idea of combining those passions came naturally. The Maldives was an obvious choice—its geography is ideal for this kind of experience. You can reach untouched reefs, remote atolls, and dive sites that are impossible to access from land. A liveaboard is the best way to truly experience the country's incredible marine diversity.

■ What are some of the unique operational challenges in the Maldives?

One of the biggest operational challenges in marketing a liveaboard fleet in the Maldives is balancing the high expectations of luxury and comfort with the logistical complexities of operating in a remote island environment. Fuel, provisions, crew training, and vessel maintenance all require careful planning. The weather can shift quickly. Government policies can sometimes be supportive, there's no specific infrastructure built for liveaboards, so we rely on a mix of local partnerships and in-house coordination.

■ What's the typical guest profile today, and how has that changed over the years?

In the beginning, most of our guests were dedicated divers. Today, we still welcome many divers, but we also see more high-end travelers, couples, and families. Some come for snorkeling or simply to experience the Maldives in a more private and immersive way. The guest profile has definitely broadened.

■ Do first-time guests find the experience different from resort-based holidays?

Absolutely. First-time liveaboard guests often say the experience far exceeds their expectations. There's a real



sense of freedom—waking up to a new view every day, diving untouched reefs, and building camaraderie with other guests and crew. Many say it's hard to go back to a resort after this.

■ Who is your typical liveaboard client?

Our typical clients are mainly divers—people who are passionate about the ocean and want to explore as much as possible in a short time. But in recent 10/15 years, we've also welcomed more families and luxury travelers looking for a private, immersive way to experience the Maldives.

■ Where do most of your clients come from?

Europe is our main market, particularly Italy, but we've seen increasing interest from Asia, North America, and Latin America, including Brazil and Mexico.





■ Are there differences in client expectations between liveaboard guests and charter clients?

Yes. Liveaboard guests expect a more active, dive-focused experience, while charter clients usually look for privacy, flexibility, and relaxation.

■ How does the business side of liveaboards compare to traditional charters? Are they more scalable or profitable?

Liveaboards can be more scalable if you standardize your fleet and services. Margins are often better over time because of fixed itineraries and regular bookings, though initial investment and consistent operation are crucial. Traditional charters may have higher per-trip profits, but they're less predictable.

■ Are you noticing changes in booking numbers when comparing charters and liveaboards? Is one sector growing faster than the other?

Yes, liveaboards are growing faster, especially post-COVID, as people look for immersive, experience-based travel. Charter demand is stable but more seasonal and luxury-focused.

■ What are your biggest running costs?

Fuel and crew are the largest ongoing expenses, followed by maintenance and logistics. Efficient planning can make a big difference in managing these costs.

■ What kind of staffing and HR challenges are unique to this sector?

Retention and training are big challenges. Crew need technical skills and the ability to live and work at sea for extended periods. Dive certifications, first aid, and strong hospitality experience are essential, especially because they're in constant contact with guests.

■ How do you see the future of liveaboards in the Maldives?

The market is definitely growing. More travelers are looking for meaningful, eco-conscious experiences. We're already incorporating sustainable practices and scientific collaborations—we've been organizing research cruises with Italian universities for years. I believe the future lies in creating value beyond luxury: conservation, education, and personalized experiences.

■ Any advice for someone looking to enter the liveaboard business?

Have a clear vision, know your target audience, and never compromise on service or safety. This business is incredibly rewarding but requires passion and hands-on commitment.

■ What's been your proudest moment so far?


Seeing guests return year after year—and even bring their children who've grown into divers themselves. That kind of long-term connection is what makes all the effort worthwhile.



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A VOYAGE THROUGH TIME, WILDLIFE, AND CONSERVATION

Few places on Earth ignite the imagination quite like the Galapagos Islands. Scattered across the vast Pacific, this remote archipelago is a living laboratory of evolution – a sanctuary where nature flourishes in its most unspoiled form. Shaped by fire and water, its dramatic landscapes and endemic wildlife create a setting found nowhere else on the planet. Whether sailing through crystal-clear waters, hiking volcanic trails, or snorkeling alongside remarkable marine life, visitors are immersed in a world of extraordinary beauty and biological wonder.

By Alexandra Molina,
Business Developer
Leader at
ONIRIC Cruises

GALAPAGOS



Beyond its breathtaking landscapes, the Galapagos are home to the world's second-largest marine reserve, encompassing over 198,000 square kilometers of protected waters. This vast underwater sanctuary harbours an extraordinary array of marine life – from hammerhead sharks and sea turtles to vibrant coral reefs and majestic manta rays. As a stronghold of ocean conservation, ONIRIC cruises offer the rare opportunity to explore these waters responsibly, supporting the protection of fragile ecosystems and helping to preserve the remarkable biodiversity that makes the Galapagos truly iconic.

A Natural Wonderland

The Galapagos Islands, part of Ecuador, have remained isolated for millions of years, allowing unique species to evolve in ways not seen anywhere else. When Charles Darwin visited in 1835, the Galapagos helped inspire his theory of natural selection. Nearly two centuries later, the islands continue to amaze travelers in search of a deeper connection with nature.

Each island has its own unique ecosystem and terrain. Isabela, the largest of the archipelago, is defined by immense volcanoes, vast lava fields, and rich biodiversity, including the famous Sierra Negra Volcano and its expansive crater. San Cristobal, the easternmost island, was the first place Darwin set foot on. It is known for its lush highlands, untouched beaches and the famous

Kicker Rock, a volcanic formation full of marine life. Santa Cruz, the vivacious heart of the Galapagos, offers a perfect balance of adventure and discovery, with its highland forests, lava tunnels, and the renowned Charles Darwin Research Station. Whether exploring these islands by land or sea, kayaking through mangrove forests, diving under the ocean to discover the marine fauna, or lying in the serenity of secluded beaches, every moment in the Galapagos is a revelation.

Wildlife Found Nowhere Else

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Galapagos is its wildlife. Free from natural predators and largely unafraid of humans, the animals here offer unparalleled close-up encounters. Imagine standing just a few feet from a giant tortoise, its ancient gaze reflecting centuries of survival.

Watch blue-footed boobies perform their iconic courtship dance, or witness the extraordinary adaptability of marine iguanas as they dive into the sea in search of food.

The Galapagos Marine Reserve, the second-largest of its kind in the world, protects an astonishingly diverse underwater ecosystem. Among its many endemic species, the flightless cormorant and the Galapagos penguin stand out as evolutionary marvels. The cormorant, having no natural predators on land, lost its



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ability to fly and instead developed powerful swimming skills to hunt underwater.

The Galapagos penguin, the only penguin species to inhabit the tropics, thrives in the nutrient-rich waters surrounding the islands. Every encounter with these creatures is a testament to nature's ingenuity and resilience.

A Delicate Ecosystem in Need of Protection

Despite their awe-inspiring beauty, the Galapagos Islands face increasing threats from climate change, invasive species, and human activities. As both a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a protected national park, the Galapagos rely on strong conservation efforts to safeguard their fragile ecosystem for future generations. Sustainable tourism plays a vital role, allowing visitors to experience the islands responsibly while minimizing their environmental impact.

For those seeking an exclusive and eco-conscious adventure, the Galapagos offer a unique opportunity to explore nature with minimal disturbance. Chartering a yacht provides access to remote locations while promoting responsible travel, allowing visitors to appreciate the islands without compromising their delicate balance.



An Unforgettable Journey

A trip to the Galapagos is more than a vacation. It is a connection to a world where nature prevails. Whether snorkeling with sea lions in turquoise water, diving with whitetip reef sharks, walking alongside giant tortoises, or marveling at volcanic landscapes, every experience here is profound. These islands remind us of the delicate balance that sustains life on our planet and the importance of conserving its wonders.

For those seeking adventure, discovery, and a deeper connection with nature, ONIRIC Cruises offers the perfect way to explore the Galapagos in comfort and sustainability. With carefully curated itineraries, eco-friendly operations, and expert naturalist guides, ONIRIC ensures an unforgettable journey through this extraordinary archipelago.

Traveling aboard our premium vessels allows you to experience the Galapagos in a responsible way—accessing remote locations while minimizing environmental impact.

This is a place where time moves slowly, where the wild remains untamed, and each moment feels like a tribute to the extraordinary beauty of the natural world.



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TOP 5 BAREBOAT CHARTER DESTINATIONS FOR 2025

By Nautika Present, Jasmina Škripina

*and Why
They're
Trending*



Emma Dau / Unsplash

Bareboat charter – the practice of renting a vessel without crew – is growing steadily in popularity among sea lovers worldwide. It offers experienced sailors the freedom to navigate independently, without the need for a captain or crew. The key advantages? Privacy, flexibility, and the opportunity to enjoy a truly personal sailing experience at your own pace.

There's a broad selection of vessels to choose from – sailboats, catamarans, and motor yachts – as long as the charterer has a valid license and enough experience. Sailboats and catamarans remain favourites for their accessibility and easy handling, but motor yachts are becoming more popular, especially in destinations where comfort and a touch of luxury are part of the appeal.

For the 2025 season, five destinations stand out for their rising popularity among bareboat charterers. The appeal varies – from stunning natural landscapes and strong infrastructure to favourable regulations and the growing interest in sustainable travel. Some spots are ideal for first-time sailors, others better suited to experienced crews, but all promise a memorable and rewarding journey at sea.

■ CROATIA – A Nautical Paradise with over 1,000 Islands

Croatia remains a leader in European bareboat charters, thanks to its indented coastline, modern marinas, and stable weather conditions. As an EU member, it also streamlines administrative procedures for foreign sailors, making trip planning significantly easier.

Content Pixie / Unsplash



Istria and Kvarner are excellent for beginners, while Dalmatia – with key departure points in Split, Šibenik, and Dubrovnik – offers more challenges and authentic experiences. Islands such as Hvar, Vis, Brač, and Lastovo enchant with beautiful coves, crystal-clear waters, and rich cultural heritage.

Matthew Waring / Unsplash



Matthew Waring / Unsplash

■ GREECE – The Cyclades and the Ionian Islands

Greece is synonymous with sailing, offering steady seasonal winds, a rugged coastline, and countless bays. The Cyclades (Mykonos, Paros, Santorini) attract with vibrant energy and nightlife, while the Ionian Islands (Lefkada, Kefalonia) are better suited for more peaceful sailing and family adventures.

■ ITALY – Sardinia and the Amalfi Coast

Italy’s coastal waters combine natural beauty with world-class cuisine. Sardinia is known for its turquoise bays that provide ideal anchorages, while the Amalfi Coast blends history, luxury, and authentic Mediterranean charm. These destinations are ideal for those wishing to combine sailing with cultural and gastronomic experiences.

■ CARIBBEAN – British Virgin Islands (BVI)

The British Virgin Islands are among the most popular bareboat charter destinations in the Caribbean. Thanks to a well-established charter sector, clear local regulations, and short distances between islands, they continue to be a favourite among sailors. Steady trade winds and warm, crystal-clear waters make the BVI ideal for relaxed cruising. The season runs from December to April, with islands like Tortola, Virgin Gorda, and Anegada offering an authentic tropical escape.



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL BAREBOAT CHARTER

- **LICENSE AND EXPERIENCE:** Most destinations require an internationally recognised certification, such as the ICC or RYA Day Skipper.
- **ROUTE PLANNING:** Research anchorages, weather conditions, and local regulations in advance.
- **LOCAL REGULATIONS AND SAILING RULES:** These can change and significantly impact the safety and success of your charter.
- **SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND COMMUNICATION:** Make sure your vessel is equipped with reliable navigation and communication systems.
- **KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL CUSTOMS:** Respect for maritime culture contributes to safety and a more enjoyable experience.
- **INSURANCE:** Additional coverage for the vessel and deposit is recommended.
- **VESSEL SELECTION:** Choose your sailboat, catamaran, or motor yacht according to route conditions and budget.

Bareboat chartering offers more than ever – the freedom, independence, and opportunity to create your own sea adventure. Destinations such as Croatia, Greece, Italy, the Caribbean, and Asia are waiting to be discovered. With a valid license, careful planning, and the right vessel, your journey can become more than just a vacation – it can be a personal discovery of the sea and freedom.



■ ASIA – Thailand

For those seeking exotic landscapes and a different atmosphere, Thailand (Phuket) offers unique opportunities. The infrastructure for bareboat charters is still developing, making careful planning and familiarity with local regulations essential. Calm bays, coral reefs, untouched nature, and local culture make this destination perfect for exploring remote, less commercialized regions.



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By Dominique Michon:
local editorial skipper and creator
of the *Lefkas Sail Guide*

NAVIGATE *the* AUTHENTIC



A 7-Day Sailing Itinerary around LEFKAS

Ionian Islands. For many, they evoke azure seas and white cliffs. But the Ionian is much more than that. Though the islands sit close together, each beats to its own rhythm: pine-covered Kalamos contrasts with dry, rugged Acarnania; sleepy Episkopi offers a different pace than lively Syvota. Just as diverse as the islands are the sailors drawn here. That's why this seven-day itinerary presents two distinct experiences each day – from barefoot bays to spirited villages. With manageable distances of 12 to 22 nautical miles, there's plenty of time to relax and let the day unfold naturally.

Day 1 – Arrival in Lefkas

Land in Aktio and take a taxi to Lefkas Town. Stroll through narrow lanes lined with candy-coloured, earthquake-proof houses. Stop by Papas Biomarket, where two brothers roast fresh coffee, and visit the nearby farmers' market (open until noon). Rent a scooter to circle the Gira lagoon road, where the sea blends into wetlands dotted with flamingos and pelicans. Swim and lunch at beachside Varko or Inoro.

When you're ready to sail, head 10 nautical miles south to Paleros. Drop anchor, watch the sun set behind Lefkas, and dine at New Mill Tavern, where Mahi serves heartfelt dishes without a menu—only stopping when your smile says: *enough*.



Day 2 – Kalamos or Kastos

Pause in Mytikas for galaktoboureko at Galatis, or enjoy freshly caught fish cleaned table-side at Pharos by local legend Jimmy. For the night, settle in peaceful Episkopi—either in the small port or at anchor—and dine at Varko, the little white house on the beach, where Christos greets you on his motorbike to lend a hand. (Note: open to the north—best to check Poseidon's mood.)

Craving more miles? Drop anchor in Porto Leone, explore the abandoned village left behind after the '53 earthquake, and dine aboard beneath a sky full of stars.

Day 3 – Atokos & South Ithaka

Pause at Atokos – a wild, uninhabited island with Robinson Crusoe vibes. Then sail to Vathy, Ithaka's elegant capital. Enter the famously windy bay – it calms by evening. For fine bay-view dining, head to Agathi.

Prefer barefoot and turquoise? Anchor at Filiatro with KIRKI. Busy? Try Sarakiniko Bay around the corner, with Lea's retro beach taverna.

Day 4 – Kefalonia or North Ithaka

Sail south. Stop at the little secret Votsalo beachbar for homemade burgers. Continue to Agia Effimia (Kefalonia) and dine at Amalia, where mum cooks and son Dionisis might play bouzouki.

Alternatively, sail north through the breezy Strait of Kefalonia. Drop anchor in Polis Bay and take a walk to Stavros, the heart of northern Ithaca. Goats bleat nearby as archaeologist and tour guide Spyros brings the legend of Odysseus to life—a personal favourite featured in the *Lefkas Sail Guide*. You can also join Aphrodite's

cooking class at Kanenas—meaning 'Nobody' in Greek, a nod to Odysseus' clever trick—or simply come for an unforgettable dinner.

Day 5 – Vasiliki or Asos

Sail north. For sailors who love to lean, the wind here delivers. Try windsurfing in Vasiliki, eat in the cozy patio of Patio Dining, or book a local wine tasting up in the hills. Or, if the weather allows, visit Asos (Kefalonia) – one of the region's most scenic villages. Dine at 3 Wise Monkeys, with Greek–South American flair.

Day 6 – Meganisi

Your perfect last-night island. For live dancing and grilled meat, head to Lakis in Spartochori. For charm, cocktails and seafood, go to Vathy and eat at Fisherman's. Not in the mood to dock? Drop anchor in tranquil Abelaki Bay and take the dinghy ashore to Taverna Minas, where each grilled sardine feels like a small ceremony, and time gently slips into island rhythm.

Day 7 – Tacking Back to Lefkas

Last day to play – enjoy the final tacks north and one more swim. Stop at Breath of Zorbas, anchor or moor at Panos' pontoon, and savour a last lunch with your feet in the sand – a final salty sigh before heading home.

This route blends favourites from my years on the water. For more off-radar gems check @lefkassailguide | www.lefkassailguide.com



ZANZIBAR

The Indian Ocean's Best-Kept Sailing Secret

There are few places in the world where the scent of cloves blends with the salt of the sea like it does in Zanzibar. Set adrift in the Indian Ocean, just off Tanzania's coast, this island has long been a meeting point of cultures and trade. Once a vital hub in the spice route and a centuries-old melting pot of Swahili, Arab, Indian, and European influences, Zanzibar still holds something rare—a sailing destination that feels both untouched and timeless.

By Wojciech Setlak, Phillip Yachtsun Charter

Andre-Abreu - Unsplash



A Cruising Ground Unlike Any Other

Zanzibar is not just one island—it's a whole constellation of them. The main islands, Unguja (often simply called Zanzibar

Island) and its quieter sister Pemba, are surrounded by dozens of smaller islets, making it easy to spend days—or even weeks—leisurely island-hopping. For yacht charterers, this is a dreamscape of protected anchorages, turquoise lagoons, and coral reefs alive with marine life.

The sailing infrastructure is still in its early stages—and that's part of Zanzibar's appeal. This isn't the Mediterranean, lined with marinas and fuel docks every few nautical miles. Instead, yachts drop anchor near quiet fishing villages, untouched beaches, or boutique eco-resorts hidden in the palms. In Nungwi, at the northern tip of the island, traditional dhow builders still craft boats by hand, while the island's small but growing charter scene welcomes guests with genuine warmth and relaxed flexibility.

A Charter Experience Beyond the Ordinary

What sets Zanzibar apart in the world of yacht charters is not just its natural beauty, but its authenticity. Here, sailing is more than a lifestyle—it's a gateway to culture, nature, and discovery.

Guests can expect to snorkel with dolphins and turtles off Mnemba Atoll, dine on seafood grilled over open flames on a private sandbank, or visit a centuries-old spice plantation inland. They can swim in bath-warm seas, drift past mangrove forests, or spend a night stargazing from the deck in an anchorage that feels like the edge of the world.

The region's biodiversity is astonishing, from whale sharks off Mafia Island to vibrant coral ecosystems around Pemba. For divers, it's a dreamscape. For honeymooners, a private catamaran charter is the epitome of romantic escape. And for families or groups, the area's flexible itineraries allow for as much—or as little—adventure as you like.

Charter Options: From Simple to Sublime

Although Zanzibar still feels like a well-kept secret, it offers a wide range of yacht charter experiences. Several international charter platforms list bareboat and skippered catamarans in the 40–50-foot range—perfect for hands-on sailors keen to explore on their own terms, or small groups looking for an affordable, skippered getaway.

For those who prefer to simply relax, local operators offer catamarans with a captain and chef. These charters often combine sailing with curated experiences: diving excursions, cultural trips to nearby villages, or even inland safaris.



Humphrey M - Unsplash

Zanzibar may not yet be a major superyacht hub, but that's slowly changing. A select few luxury vessels—including Safira (45 m) and Cloudbreak (75 m)—have started to include the archipelago on their itineraries, bringing five-star comforts to this wild and beautiful corner of the world.

When to Go, Where to Drop Anchor

Zanzibar's sailing season follows the rhythm of the monsoons. From December to March, conditions are idyllic—hot, dry, and calm. This is the high season for both tourism and yachting, with the clearest waters and most predictable breezes. June to October brings cooler breezes and great conditions for sailors looking for a bit more adventure.

As for the itinerary, highlights abound. Mnemba Atoll is a must for snorkelling and dolphin sightings. Chumbe Island, a marine reserve and eco-retreat, offers guided reef walks and rare hikes through coral rag forests. Pemba Island offers solitude, spectacular diving, and a glimpse of coastal life largely untouched by tourism. Nungwi provides a livelier stop with restaurants, beach bars, and artisanal shipbuilders, while Stone Town remains an essential cultural anchor for every voyage.

The Future is East

As the global yacht charter market grows more complex and widespread, Zanzibar stands as a reminder of why people fell in love with sailing in the first place. It is not about glamour or grandiosity, but connection—to the



Nungwi Dmitry Limonov - Unsplash

ocean, to people, and to a way of travelling that is slow, immersive, and sustainable.

For brokers and operators looking to expand into new regions, or clients seeking destinations that still hold the spark of discovery, Zanzibar deserves its place on the map—not just as an emerging market, but as an experience that brings back something the modern charter world often forgets: wonder.



Phillip Yacht Sun Charter



Elliot Paris - Unsplash

Our goal is to give guests an authentic and comfortable Zanzibar experience—combining the luxury of a fully equipped yacht with the raw beauty and rich culture of East Africa. We want sailing here to feel effortless, safe, and unforgettable.

Discover Zanzibar



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The Perfect Crew Onboard

HOW TO FIND, VET AND RETAIN TOP TALENT

Working on board isn't just a job – it's a lifestyle. The onboard atmosphere is crucial not just for performance, but for reputation too. In yachting, reputation is everything – and nothing stays secret for long.

That's why crew management has never been more critical than it is now. The demand for skilled professionals grows every season, and the competition for the best ones is no longer just about salary. It's about conditions, atmosphere, and trust. Because great crews don't leave great boats. Where the ecosystem is right - solid management, fair pay, mutual respect, a safe environment - people stay for years. Everything may look perfect on the outside – but if chaos and toxicity reign within, word spreads fast. And not in a good way.

Why Crew Recruitment Is Now Easier - and Harder

On the one hand, finding candidates is easier: platforms, social media, recommendations - the options are endless. But that's exactly what makes it challenging. Within minutes of posting a vacancy on Facebook or LinkedIn, you'll receive dozens of CVs. And you'll need hours to filter, verify, and understand who truly fits your team.

Choosing the wrong candidate can cause problems from day one. The right person onboard can transform everything. The wrong one can destroy it just as fast.

How to Find the Right Candidate

At YPOJ Recruitment, we deal with this challenge daily. And we've learned: success doesn't come to those who hire fast - it comes to those who hire smart.

Today's ideal crew member is not just about what's on their CV. It's about emotional maturity, team spirit, adaptability, staying composed under stress, resolving conflict, and remaining human in every situation.

With over six years of experience in the yachting industry, we don't just look at certificates or documents. We uncover real reputations - what previous crews, captains, and owners say about a candidate. And it works. Because those who start with us - stay with us.

How to Retain Your Crew

Finding crew is just the first step. Retaining them - that's where the real work begins. And that's all about creating the right conditions:

- **FINANCIAL STABILITY.** Timely and transparent payments, end-of-season bonuses, flexible incentives - without creating competition within the team.

- **WORKING CONDITIONS.** A balanced schedule, a fully functioning vessel, quiet, comfort, and uncompromising meals.
- **HUMAN VALUES.** A culture of mutual respect, zero tolerance for toxicity or abuse - of any kind.
- **STRUCTURE.** Even if everything is going well, discipline must be present. The team should know the boundaries and have someone to turn to. Comfort and order are not mutually exclusive.
- **ROOM TO GROW.** Strong people need opportunities to evolve. That's the best long-term investment.
- **INFORMAL BONDING.** Sometimes a movie night or chat in the galley builds team spirit more than any safety briefing.
- **REGULAR ATMOSPHERE CHECK-INS.** If there's toxicity - remove it. One person can sink not just the mood, but the efficiency of the entire crew.

Final Thoughts

A great yacht begins with great people. So don't settle for just anyone - create conditions that attract exactly who you need. Trust your recruitment to those who can see beyond a résumé.

At YPOJ Recruitment, we don't just hire - we handpick crew who make life onboard better for you and your guests. We work for long-term results, where every contract is built on trust, quality, and a team you won't want to replace.



Founder **Olha Tretiakova**
YPOJ recruitment

Highly qualified crew - elite service on your yacht.

We connect the best clients with top candidates for luxury yachts & households since 2021.

contact@ypojrecruitment.com
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By Marija Mimica Špoljar, StartingYou Agency

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING FOR THE MODERN YACHT CREW

The yachting industry has evolved significantly, with crew members playing a crucial role not only in vessel operations, but also in delivering exceptional guest experiences.

As someone who has navigated this dynamic industry firsthand, I have come to appreciate the immense value of comprehensive training programs. These programs equip crew members with a diverse skill set that ensures both safety and exceptional service.

The Essential Role of a Hostess

A yacht hostess carries a broad range of responsibilities aimed at maximizing guest comfort and satisfaction. These duties include meal preparation, serving, maintaining the yacht's interior, and creating a welcoming atmosphere that enhances the overall charter experience.

Through my own journey, I have witnessed how a well-trained hostess can transform a guest's stay on board. Whether it's orchestrating beautifully arranged breakfasts, ensuring cabins are pristine, or assisting guests with activities, attention to detail and dedication to hospitality make all the difference. A hostess is not merely a service provider, but an integral part of the yachting experience, elevating the level of luxury and comfort onboard.

Culinary Excellence and Local Experiences

One of the most rewarding parts of being a hostess is getting to share the region's culinary traditions with guests. Visiting local markets, picking out fresh ingredients, and preparing classic dishes like škampi na buzaru (shrimps in buzara sauce) or crni rižot (cuttlefish risotto) gives them a real taste of Croatian food culture – honest, seasonal, and full of character.

More than just the food, creating the right atmosphere is key. Elegant table settings and carefully chosen decor bring the dining experience to life, turning every meal into a memorable occasion. Watching guests enjoy these special touches is one of the greatest rewards of this role.



The Value of Teamwork and Environmental Responsibility

A harmonious crew is essential for smooth yacht operations. Throughout my career, I have seen how mutual respect and collaboration create an environment where service excellence thrives. Effective teamwork ensures that each guest receives the best possible experience.

Additionally, environmental awareness is an integral part of modern yachting. Training programs emphasize responsible waste management and conservation of marine ecosystems. Educating guests on sustainable practices often inspires them to adopt eco-friendly habits, further contributing to the preservation of the breathtaking seascapes they have come to enjoy.

Conclusion

Training is the cornerstone of success in the yachting industry, particularly for hostesses who play a pivotal role in shaping the guest experience. By blending theoretical instruction with hands-on practice, agencies ensure that crew members are well-equipped to meet the demands of the profession.



Comprehensive Training: A Pathway to Success

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of the hostess role, specialized training programs have been developed to prepare individuals for life at sea. My own experience with the StartingYou training program provided a solid foundation in:

- **CULINARY SKILLS** – Efficient galley management, menu planning, and food presentation.
- **NAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE** – Basic yacht operations and effective communication with the skipper.
- **COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK** – Seamless coordination with the crew and exceptional guest engagement.
- **SAFETY PROTOCOLS** – Emergency preparedness and onboard safety procedures.
- **MAINTENANCE AND HOUSEKEEPING** – Keeping the onboard environment clean, comfortable, and well-maintained.

This well-rounded approach to training fosters confidence and competence, allowing hostesses to excel in the yachting industry and consistently deliver high standards of service.

By Selma Čubara, Founder at Čarter.hr

Strategic Ways to Protect Your Yacht Charter Brand and Boost Long-Term Growth

CRISIS MARKETING THAT WORKS WHEN BOOKINGS ARE SLOW



The outcomes are the same in both scenarios. Owners ask, “Why aren’t reservations coming in like before?” Guest counts remain constant but the market is oversaturated, price dumping is prevalent, and fleets keep growing.

First response? Panic attacks.

Desperate management often slashes prices, offers deep discounts, and urgently reaches out to partners and customers. However, this approach tends to do more harm than good. Over the years, I’ve seen many charter companies rely on these short-term tactics, which can damage their reputation and make them more vulnerable to market shifts.

Instead of reacting impulsively, let’s explore smarter approaches to managing crisis communication.

Enhancing Your Digital Presence

Your digital channels are important sources for new clients during difficult times.

Do your website and social media channels communicate professionally and consistently? Now is the time to make sure your online presence genuinely reflects your brand promise.

Share valuable, well-crafted content that reflects what sets your company apart – be it great service, elegant accommodation, or one-of-a-kind sailing spots. It’s a simple way to stay relevant and build real connection.



The same question is echoing across the industry whether you are wrapping up the final departures of the year or preparing for a new charter season: “Why are bookings slower than expected?”

Anxiety can begin as early as April, when early demand fails to appear. In other cases, it emerges in autumn, when a strong summer season doesn’t carry over into the off-season.



Share case studies and testimonials to inspire confidence and comfort in possible buyers. Transparency and authenticity can significantly reduce market fear.

For instance, think about highlighting stories from past visitors who enjoyed unforgettable memories with your business. Instead of last-minute discounts, use images and videos to carry possible consumers onboard, tempting them with the prospect of future adventures.

Your goal is to build long-term loyalty not only for urgently vacant spots but also for others.

One of the biggest missed opportunities when bookings stall is not making the most of digital marketing. Many charter companies either run broad, untargeted ads or stop their campaigns altogether.

Use this opportunity to refine your targeting strategies. Consider segmenting your audiences by trip purpose, location, and past engagement.

Platforms like META and GOOGLE ADS offer features for targeting lookalike populations depending on past visitors or retargeting website users. It’s also a great chance to experiment with creative shapes, including carousel advertising stressing experience value rather than cost or short-form films.

Please, don’t overlook SEO. Not appearing in searches for terms like “family sailing Croatia” or “catamaran holiday in Dalmatia” often means missed bookings and reduced visibility. Use quieter periods to refine your digital touchpoints, clarify your message, and optimise your funnel.

Value-Added Proposals: A Substitute for Price Cuts

Should you ignore discounting?

Consider enhancing your offer with value-added incentives. Complimentary experiences such as gourmet onboard dining, exclusive marina services, or guided tours can significantly increase perceived value without compromising your pricing integrity.



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This strategy not only maintains your business's premium position but also attracts customers who appreciate additional services more than simple savings. It sets your offer apart from competitors trapped in price-cutting cycles as well. Value-added promotions show that, even in tough times, your business delivers experiences people are happy to pay for.

Consider teaming up with local businesses to create special package deals. Partnerships like these not only add value to your offer but also build stronger ties with the community – something that truly matters in times of recovery.

Rather than short-term, discount-driven advertising, link your brand with memories, quality, and strength.

Crisis Confidence Communication Strategies

A consistent, reassuring tone across all channels shows your audience and rivals that your company is stable and dependable.

Consistent, detailed information on safety standards, cancellation policies, and booking flexibility can significantly boost consumer confidence. Proactively addressing problems through live Q&A sessions or FAQs

helps your company be customer-centric and reliable, enhancing its credibility throughout market declines.

Send targeted, informative material to maximize the effectiveness of email marketing.

Lead with empathy and a real understanding of your customers' needs, rather than relying on pressure to sell.

Regular discount alerts might not be as beneficial as a thoughtfully crafted email addressing current concerns and offering relevant information or confidence in ensuring future bookings.

Transforming Crisis into Opportunity

Slow booking times can be important turning points; they do not have to be negative. Think about increasing brand awareness with smart digital marketing, targeted value-added promotions, and polite, efficient communication instead of hurrying to reduce costs.

How you manage challenges today will shape your brand's future. Crisis marketing isn't just about surviving – it's about emerging stronger, more respected, and better positioned than before.



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GREENER HORIZONS

Three Experts on Steering Charter Industry Toward Sustainability

Naja Bertolt Jensen / Unsplash

As the charter industry continues to grow, so too does its environmental footprint. Balancing economic development with marine conservation has become essential. To explore how the sector can evolve more responsibly, we spoke with three leaders in maritime sustainability: Ornela Krezić, Manager at Green Sail; Dinko Salopek, Naval Architect at Mar Servis and creator of the ECO Cube; and Christina Archer, Director of Sustainable Sailing Greece.

■ **Q: What are the most basic steps the charter industry must take to move toward sustainability?**

■ **ORNELA KREZIĆ** (Green Sail): “While we’re waiting for perfect technical solutions, human behavior remains



ORNELA KREZIĆ
(Green Sail)



CHRISTINA ARCHER
(Sustainable Sailing Greece)



DINKO SALOPEK
(Mar Servis / ECO Cube)

critical. The backbone of nautical sustainability lies in well-structured procedures. Whether it’s anchoring correctly or managing waste properly, clear procedures ensure ecosystem protection—often even without cutting-edge tech.

That’s why at Green Sail, we help our charter partners develop environmental policies and operational plans.”

■ **CHRISTINA ARCHER** (Sustainable Sailing Greece): “Exactly—sustainability isn’t just about equipment, it’s about behavior. We’re seeing growing efforts by brokers



and operators who distribute our educational materials to guests and crews, encouraging habits like avoiding anchoring in Posidonia oceanica seagrass meadows—critical carbon sinks and habitats.

We need more of this. Sustainability should be at the core of every charter business, with formal policies on fuel reduction, plastic elimination, eco-friendly cleaning products, and more.”

■ **DINKO SALOPEK** (Mar Servis / ECO Cube): “From our side, the charter industry should enforce existing rules more strictly—rules often ignored due to lack of infrastructure. Our ECO Cube was designed to reduce organic waste discharge and general littering at sea, but the real solution needs to be scaled—integrated into charter operations and supported by local authorities.”

■ **Q: Are there innovative products gaining momentum in the charter industry?**

■ **KREZIĆ**: “We’re seeing great ideas—especially in antifouling. Eco-friendly solutions like ultrasonic



ECO Cube



antifouling or products like Sonihull and Finsulate can drastically reduce marine pollution. Imagine just one season in the Adriatic without toxic antifouling—that would be a major win for the marine environment.

The electrification of vessels is another promising trend. Battery costs are falling, and lithium iron phosphate batteries offer reduced emissions compared to fossil fuels—plus they eliminate risks of spills, which is crucial in ecologically sensitive areas.”

■ **ARCHER**: “Yes, we’ve seen increased use of solar panels, electric outboards, and marine-safe cleaning products on charter vessels. These are small steps but impactful. We’re particularly excited about closed-loop water systems, which purify and recycle greywater onboard. In places like the Cyclades, where freshwater is scarce, this could be a game-changer.”

■ **SALOPEK**: “Products like ours face a challenge: they serve the collective more than the individual. ECO Cube isn’t just a device; it’s part of a needed infrastructure. It’s flexible, mountable anywhere, and simple—but we need a network. This requires buy-in from communities, ports, and national authorities. Still, feedback has been very positive—people love its simplicity and impact.”

■ **Q: What would make the biggest difference in reducing the industry’s environmental footprint?**

■ **KREZIĆ**: “I believe clearly defined procedures and operator accountability have the greatest potential to create real change. Even small steps—optimized fuel use, reducing plastic, choosing where and how to anchor—can add up.”

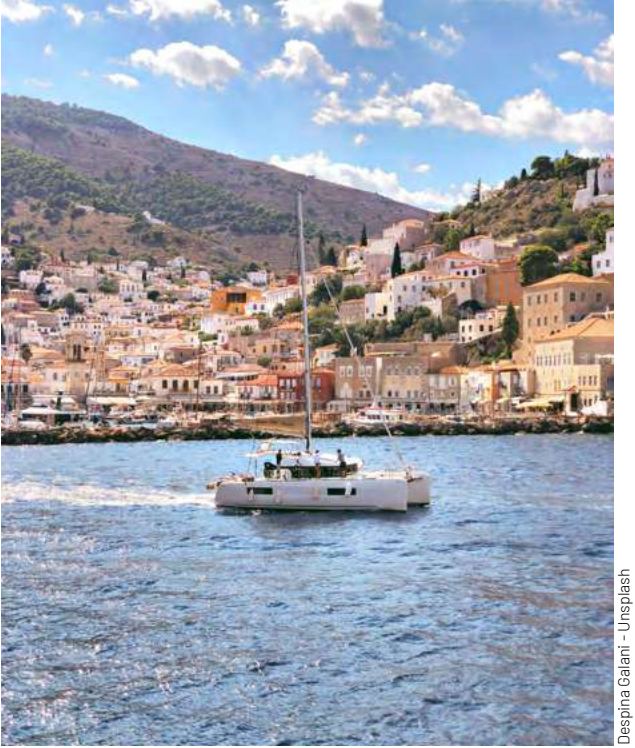
■ **ARCHER**: “Greece urgently needs investment in eco-mooring systems. Without buoys, boats drop anchors into sensitive areas, causing long-term damage. Similarly, there’s a huge gap in blackwater pump-out stations and waste recycling on smaller islands. Charter companies must pressure local authorities to fill these gaps—and help fund solutions where possible.”

■ SALOPEK: “The ECO Cube offers a practical step toward cleaner waters, but meaningful change in habits takes time. Our long-term vision is a network of floating waste collection points at marina entrances and popular bays, integrated into everyday boating culture rather than seen as an exception.”

■ Q: So, what does the future of sustainable sailing look like?

■ KREZIĆ: “Every actor in the charter chain has a role to play. Guests, crews, owners, and authorities all must work together. Even small steps add up—routine maintenance, efficient fuel use, and sustainable navigation build a strong base for protecting the environment. Clear procedures help manage human impact and safeguard the future of the industry.”

■ ARCHER: “Sustainability is not a luxury anymore—it’s a necessity. No single product or company will solve every issue. But together, through education, innovation, and collaboration, we can protect the seas for future generations.”



■ SALOPEK: “Ultimately, we must create habits and systems that make sustainable choices effortless and visible. It is this awareness—the quiet understanding of our shared responsibility—that must guide every solution we pursue to protect the only planet we call home. Only through this collective shift can we truly turn the tide.”



CONCLUSION

„Sustainability must be embedded into the core mission of every charter business. This means formal policies and setting goals.” (Christina Archer, Sustainable Sailing Greece)

Innovation, education, and behavioral change are all essential pillars of a sustainable maritime future. As these three voices make clear, it’s time for the industry to chart a new course—one that keeps seas clean, vibrant, and sail-worthy for decades to come.



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By Ben Taylor,
Host of the Ben Taylor Podcast

WHY CYBER MONITORING IS VITAL FOR THE SUPERYACHT CHARTER INDUSTRY

The allure of superyachts lies in their luxury, privacy, and cutting-edge technology. Yet, these same elements make them prime targets for cyber threats. For the charter yacht industry, where trust, confidentiality, and seamless operations are essential, the consequences of a cyber breach can be devastating.

The Stakes

Cyber attacks on superyachts can lead to stolen financial data, unauthorised surveillance, and operational disruption. In an industry built on delivering unparalleled experiences, a single cyber incident can undermine client trust, halt operations, and invite regulatory scrutiny.

Why Superyachts Are Vulnerable

Superyachts house complex networks, integrating navigation, communications, and entertainment systems. Each system is a potential entry point for attackers. Maintaining cyber hygiene through network segmentation, regular software updates, and crew training is essential, but not always sufficient. Continuous monitoring and rapid threat response are crucial to stay ahead.

Common Causes of Cyber Breaches

SUPERYACHTS FACE HEIGHTENED RISKS DUE TO:

- **Visiting Guests and Personal Devices:** Guests often bring multiple devices, each potentially vulnerable.
- **Rotating Crew Members:** High staff turnover can lead to inconsistent cyber practices.
- **Numerous IoT Devices:** Smart TVs, AV equipment, and navigation systems expand the attack surface.
- **Weak Credentials and Poor Network Security:** Inadequate password management and unsecured Wi-Fi networks create easy access points for attackers.



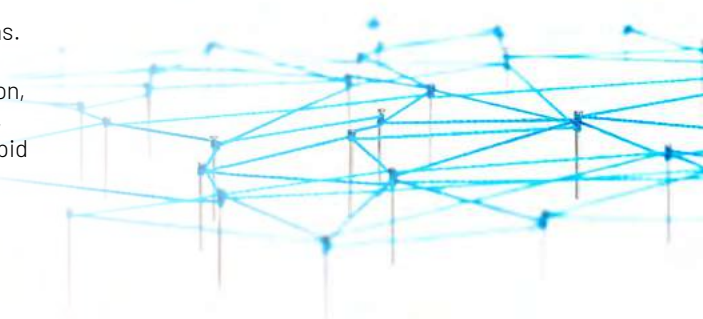
The Role of Cyber Monitoring

Cyber monitoring continuously analyses network activity, identifying threats before they escalate. This proactive approach ensures quick detection of unauthorised access, malware, or unusual data transfers. For charter yachts, effective monitoring safeguards sensitive client information, ensures uninterrupted service, and upholds the privacy that clients expect.

Building Resilience: An Industry Imperative

Cyber security isn't just about protecting the vessel — it's about preserving the trust and relationships that drive the charter experience. Integrated solutions, such as those provided by industry experts like Computer Network Defence, offer comprehensive protection without overwhelming yacht crews.

In today's world, cyber security is essential.



A First-Hand Account from ETO Dai Baldwin

Dai, an ETO (Electro-Technical Officer) aboard a large superyacht, recalls the unsettling experience of a cyber attack shortly after joining the vessel.

What began as a trickle of phishing emails quickly escalated into a full-scale breach, granting hackers access to more than 80 gigabytes of sensitive data — including past emails, invoices, and account information. The attackers exploited this data to send spoof emails to suppliers, impersonating the crew and requesting payments — a tactic known as Business Email Compromise (BEC).

Reflecting on the incident, Dai emphasises the importance of proactive cyber risk assessments. While often seen as tedious, these assessments are crucial for identifying vulnerabilities and fortifying defences before an attack occurs. Without established protocols, managing a cyber

breach becomes chaotic, often leading to operational disruptions such as shutting down communications and internet access onboard.

This story underscores the critical need for robust cyber policies, continuous monitoring, and regular staff training to safeguard superyachts from ever-evolving cyber threats.



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INNOVATIVE GADGETS SHAPING the FUTURE of CHARTER OPERATIONS

As technology develops and guest expectations change, charter operators are embracing new gadgets that enhance operating efficiency, comfort, and safety. These new approaches seek to improve the charter experience. Icebreaker highlights six innovative ideas that are revolutionising the way charters function and providing new benefits to both operators and passengers.

1. Anchor Monitoring

Anchoring anxiety is a real concern for both skippers and guests. VisionAnchor solves this with a smart anchor buoy that connects to an onboard base unit and mobile app.

"The alert system gives both skippers and guests peace of mind, particularly in unfamiliar anchorages," explains Matija Jašarov, Co-founder at VisionAnchor "It reduces the need for constant checking and allows for more restful nights onboard."

Looking forward, VisionAnchor plans to expand the device's capabilities, potentially turning the device into a multi-use platform for safety, research, and environmental monitoring.

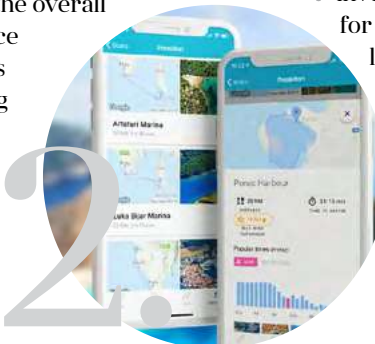


2. Real-Time Destination Guidance

Sentinel Marine Solution's 'Destinations' is an AI-based route recommendation tool within the company's mobile app that helps sailors and charter guests find optimal sailing spots—based on weather, location, and personal preferences.

"We wanted to give users an intelligent tool that acts like a local guide," says Klaudia Jurić, marketing manager at Sentinel Marine Solutions. "The idea is to reduce the stress of planning and allow guests to enjoy more of their time at sea."

The app also shows live anchorage occupancy and provides estimated travel times, supporting smarter and more flexible itineraries. For charter operations, this can reduce planning demands on skippers and improve the overall experience for guests by helping them find quieter or more desirable locations.



3. Comfort Through Stabilisation

Seasickness and onboard motion remain persistent challenges in the charter industry. Smartgyro's gyroscopic stabilizers aim to reduce roll and improve overall comfort. Charter operators can promote this feature as part of a luxury upgrade, setting themselves apart from competitors

"Stabilizers are becoming a key differentiator, even in smaller charter fleets," says Pieter Feenstra, Sales Director at Smartgyro. "Operators tell us they see better reviews and higher return rates when guest comfort is noticeably improved."

Stabilizers are increasingly seen as a worthwhile investment for operators looking to improve guest comfort, reduce seasickness, and create a smoother experience on the water.



4. Electric Start Outboard

Manual pull-starting can be a real pain, so when a single touch is all it takes to start the engine, it definitely makes a good impression on guests who may not be familiar with traditional pull-start systems, especially women and children, who are increasingly taking part in boating activities. The Hidea HDF 6 HES-IB offers a simplified user experience that meets the needs of the market and customers.

"It's a small engine, but the electric start makes a big difference for ease of use," says John Cramer, sales director at Hidea. "For tenders and small boats used during charters, this kind of accessibility makes day trips smoother for both crew and guests."

The battery recharges during use, eliminating the need for manual recharging - a useful feature for tenders that are often stop-and-go. It's a small gadget with a big return in guest comfort.



5. Ergonomic Safety Gear

Safety on board should never mean compromising on comfort. That's why NAVELA has introduced a new range of ultra-light life vests by Plastimo, designed to offer both essential protection and ergonomic wearability. Featuring four inflation systems, an ergonomic and compact design, and available in a variety of colours with customisation options, these vests are a smart choice for charter operators looking to enhance guest safety without sacrificing style or comfort.

"Guests are more likely to wear life jackets that don't feel bulky or restrictive," says Ana Čalić, head of marketing and development at NAVELA. "When safety gear looks and feels more like sportswear, people treat it that way—and that means better compliance."

For charter operators, such user-friendly equipment helps bridge the gap between safety requirements and passenger satisfaction.



6. AI at Sea

Artificial intelligence is finding practical applications in the maritime sector. SEA.AI's computer vision platform enables real-time detection of floating hazards, vessels, and debris, even in low-visibility conditions.

"We see it as an added layer of situational awareness—not a replacement for the crew, but a complement," says Solenn Gouerou, head of marketing at SEA.AI. "It helps reduce blind spots and fatigue, especially on long or complex charters."

The company's new product, Brain, enables existing marine cameras to be upgraded into AI-powered hazard detection systems—providing a retrofit-friendly entry point for operators exploring this tech.

Together, these innovations signal a new direction — one where practical, user-focused solutions take center stage. Their shared goal? A smoother, smarter charter experience for everyone on board.

With the summer season approaching and competition heating up, these innovations provide operators with practical tools to differentiate their offerings, enhance service quality, and meet the evolving expectations of today's charter guests.

EWAKE

THE FUTURE OF LUXURY WATER SPORTS

HOW EWAKE IS REDEFINING INNOVATION THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

When it comes to defining the future of luxury water sports, Ewake Germany GmbH is leading the charge. Ewake's jetboards, 100% made in Germany, are the intelligent evolution, perfectly blending exhilarating performance with the environmental consciousness that defines modern yachting. Ewake's fundamental breakthrough lies in powerful collaborations, together driving technology to unprecedented limits.

Since 2020, Ewake has pioneered the most advanced electric jetboards. Crafted with a full carbon hull, which makes these boards exceptionally lightweight and fast. The company's patented innovations, including the in-water battery swap mechanism and smart battery monitoring, not only elevate the user experience but also solidify Ewake's standing as a leading technology firm. Founder Peter Ruwe's vision, inspired by classic Riva boats, is vividly expressed in the signature three-jet propulsion and elegant carbon-wood design, truly setting Ewake apart.

A Perfect Partnership

Ewake and Sialia Yachts, renowned for producing the world's only fully electric yachts, have teamed up to promote and educate the public about the serene, noiseless experience offered by electric yachting. A shared passion and aligned values have led to an ideal partnership, which will officially debut at the upcoming Cannes Yachting Festival.

Sialia Yachts was founded by Stanislaw Szadkowski and Tomasz Gackoski in 2017. Since then, they have combined their passion and engineering expertise to create several lines of state-of-the-art, high-tech electric yachts that offer unparalleled range, performance, and silence. Headquartered in Warsaw, Poland, Sialia Yachts is a global brand with an expanding team that includes members based in Italy, the Netherlands and the U.S.

As the only manufacturer in the industry building electric boats over 40 feet (ranging from 40 to 100 feet), Sialia Yachts utilizes AMPROS electric propulsion technology integrated with a proprietary advanced Ship Management System (SMS). This SMS enables groundbreaking features such as extended battery monitoring, remote diagnostics, and preventive maintenance. As fully electric vessels, the yachts eliminate the need for



traditional engines.

They also feature unique safety innovations. One example: the batteries are designed to discharge within seconds if water enters the system, effectively eliminating any risks.

Introduced in 2022, the Sialia 57 Deep Silence has captivated European waters — and is now setting a new standard in the U.S. market..

Currently under construction in Poland, the fully electric Sialia 45 yacht is approaching completion and continues to make waves in the industry. With cutting-edge propulsion, careful attention to recyclable materials, and advanced safety features, the Sialia 45 has received second prize in Robb Report's 2025 Best of the Best Awards in the Electric Yacht category, showcasing the hallmarks that distinguish Sialia Yachts from the rest of the luxury market.

The Capsule Collection by Sialia and Ewake — available in sizes 1.51m and 1.72m goes beyond aesthetics. With joint board-yacht technology, users will be able to monitor the performance of the board and receive real-time communication. These boards complement Sialia Yachts' offering, allowing yacht owners to enjoy not only the silent sailing experience but also thrilling, whisper-quiet fun on the water with Ewake.

Milvio Ricci, Chief Commercial Officer at Sialia Yachts, says: "Our partnership with Ewake is another milestone for our company. We finally have a partner who shares our product vision, our values, and a deep environmental consciousness. We couldn't imagine a better partner to complement our offering and continue to elevate the sea



experience."

Scaling up Through Smart Partnerships

Ewake's collaboration with Siemens intergrates Industrial-grade engineering standards into luxury water sports. Utilizing Solid Edge from Siemens portfolio software, they have digitalized and unified the jetboard manufacturing, contributing to the stable growth in production.

Innovation and Tuning

Ewake's partnership with Alpha Ventures, of Franz Walter GmbH, synonymous with F1 and automotive propulsion excellence, has transformed jetboard maintenance. Leveraging their energetic optimization technology,



This collaboration delivers maintenance-free jets, including a tuning kit. The result is consistent performance throughout the jets' entire operational lifetime, eliminating the need for scheduled maintenance. Despite being the shortest on the market, this advanced technology makes the boards incredibly easy for anyone to ride.

Flexible Ownership Models

In addition, understanding the seasonal usage patterns of yacht owners, Ewake has developed a comprehensive leasing program that aligns with operational realities, specifically designed for Charter Companies and Commercial Yacht Owners.

Yacht Packages - Designed for Yacht Owners

Ewake offers private test rides anywhere in Europe directly at your yacht. Ewake's yacht packages include fully customizable boards and storage solutions including tailored multiple batteries management solution and off-season maintenance, making it the ultimate one-stop shop.

Ewake redefines luxury water sports by leveraging strategic partnerships and proprietary German engineering to deliver electric jetboards that set new benchmarks for performance, reliability, and an unparalleled user experience.

Book your test ride online or meet Ewake at Cannes Yachting Festival 2025!



Cocktail Crafting



ON A CHARTER YACHT

Elevating the Experience at Sea

By Emanuele Mancini, director
at The Spirit Lab London
Institute of Bartending

Serving cocktails on a luxury charter yacht is a completely different art from mixing drinks in a bar or a cruise ship. Unlike commercial establishments with unlimited storage, specialized equipment, and quick resupply options, yacht bartending demands creativity, adaptability, and efficiency. With limited space, fresh ingredients, and guest preferences that can shift with the tides, a yacht mixologist must stay creative while delivering top-tier service.



No Revisions / Unsplash

Essential Cocktails for Charter Guests

Certain cocktails are universally expected on a yacht charter, and a good bartender should master them while adding unique twists to enhance the experience.

- **MARGARITA WITH A MEDITERRANEAN TOUCH**
A classic margarita is a must, but on a charter yacht, why not infuse it with rosemary and sea salt? A sprig of charred rosemary adds fragrant depth – and its smoky notes blend beautifully with the salty sea air.
- **PIÑA COLADA WITH A FRESH UPGRADE**
Instead of the typical frozen version, try a **Mediterranean Piña Colada**, using fresh Greek yoghurt instead of coconut cream for a tangy, refreshing twist.
- **NEGRONI WITH A COASTAL EDGE**
The rich, bittersweet Negroni is a staple, but adding **fig-infused gin** or a hint of **thyme** can create a deeper connection to Mediterranean flavours.



Patrick Langwallner / Unsplash



Hidden Gems of the Cocktail World

While guests might expect the usual mojitos and martinis, introducing them to lesser-known yet impactful drinks can elevate their experience.

- **THE SAGE & CITRUS SPRITZ** – Using fresh sage, lemon, elderflower liqueur, and prosecco, this aromatic and herbal spritz offers a refined taste with a light, bubbly finish—perfect for sunset toasts on deck.
- **ROSEMARY PALOMA** – This tequila-based cocktail benefits from fresh grapefruit juice, a touch of rosemary syrup, and a pinch of pink sea salt, making it a sophisticated yet refreshing option.
- **THE OUZO BASIL SMASH** – Inspired by Greece, this twist on a gin basil smash incorporates ouzo, lemon, and honey, offering guests an authentic taste of the Mediterranean with a contemporary flair.



- 5. **SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS** – With limited waste disposal options at sea, minimizing single-use plastics and prioritizing for fresh, local ingredients helps promote sustainability.



Crafting cocktails aboard a charter yacht is about more than just mixing drinks—it’s about storytelling, setting the tone, and creating lasting memories. By mastering both timeless classics and innovative twists, a yacht mixologist can transform a simple sundowner into a truly unforgettable experience.



Tips & Tricks for Yacht Bartending

1. **INGREDIENT EFFICIENCY** – Unlike bars, yachts have limited storage. Opt for versatile ingredients (e.g., citrus, honey, herbs) that can be used across multiple cocktails.
2. **PRE-BATCH SMARTLY** – Save time and elevate consistency by prepping syrups or infusing spirits ahead of service.
3. **ADAPT TO GUEST PREFERENCES** – Many guests now appreciate low-ABV or alcohol-free options. A thoughtfully curated mocktail menu – like a Herbal Lemon & Honey Cooler – ensures every guest feels considered.
4. **UTILIZE LOCAL FLAVORS** – Incorporate regional ingredients such as Mediterranean herbs, honey, or even local spirits like grappa or raki to create a more immersive experience.



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Zvonimir Ferina



By Ana Maria Ricov,
Fashion Designer

Does Comfort Have to Be Above Style in Crew Uniforms?

LATEST TRENDS AND MATERIALS

In the world of luxury charter yachts, the question of comfort versus style is no longer a simple either-or. As the yachting industry continues to grow and evolve, so do the expectations for crew uniforms—not only in terms of performance, but also aesthetics. Uniforms have become more than just practical attire; they are now an extension of the yacht's identity and a reflection of its brand.

As a designer with years of experience who recently entered this niche, I've come to believe that comfort must always be the foundation—but style is what gives the uniform its soul. Crew members spend



Black Bird Frame



Black Bird Frame

jackets made from breathable, weather-resistant materials have become essentials. They serve a dual purpose—offering practical protection while maintaining visual cohesion within the uniform system. When thoughtfully designed, even these utilitarian pieces can become part of the yacht's visual language.

A Shift Toward Customization and Sustainability

Another growing trend is customization. More clients are requesting uniforms that feel genuinely bespoke—whether through tailored color palettes that reflect their brand, subtle embroidery, or unique fastenings and trims. This personal touch makes the crew look like a seamless extension of the yacht, not an afterthought.

Sustainability is also coming into sharper focus. As the yachting world grows more aware of its environmental impact, there's increasing interest in using eco-conscious fabrics such as organic cotton, TENCEL™, or recycled polyester. These materials are not only more responsible, but also align with the values of a younger, more sustainability-minded clientele.

Final Thoughts

The most successful charter uniforms today are those that strike a balance between performance and personality. They support the crew in their daily tasks while visually reinforcing the yacht's identity. And when comfort and style come together, the result is a uniform that is not just worn—it's truly felt.

For me, designing crew uniforms goes beyond creating garments. It's about enhancing the onboard experience through thoughtful, functional, and beautiful design—one that respects the hard work of the crew and expresses the spirit of the yacht they represent.



Zvonimir Ferina

long, physically demanding hours onboard, often in heat, humidity, or wind. Uniforms must support that reality. Breathable, lightweight fabrics like linen and cotton are essential—not only for comfort, but also for durability and ease of care. But comfort alone isn't enough. A well-designed uniform can elevate the entire guest experience. When a crew looks refined and cohesive, it communicates professionalism and adds to the overall perception of the yacht. Uniforms have become part of a vessel's storytelling—a quiet but impactful way to visually communicate its personality.

A Signature Look

"I see crew uniforms as a signature element that reflects the yacht's identity. Colors, cuts, and patterns all play a role in creating a unified look that reflects the vessel's atmosphere. At last year's Croatia Yacht Show, I presented a collection of crew uniforms where I explored contrast and silhouette—using classic, breathable fabrics paired with refined but slightly unexpected cuts. Functionality remained the top priority, but every piece was designed to feel distinctive and contemporary. That same philosophy extended into the finer details. For instance, I designed custom fabric patterns for windbreakers and T-shirts, inspired by the movement of waves. This approach brought a subtle visual interest and a sense of place, without ever compromising the core functionality of the uniform.

Smart Materials, Smart Design

In recent years, material innovation has opened up exciting new possibilities. Today, it's not uncommon to see uniforms made from advanced performance textiles that offer UV protection, quick-dry properties, stretch, and antimicrobial finishes. These smart fabrics meet the technical demands of charter life while maintaining a sleek, tailored appearance. For cooler or windier conditions, lightweight windbreakers and softshell

ReFIT SMARTER, NOT LONGER

How to Keep Your Yacht Project on Track



Interior Renovation of 50m Motor Yacht, by Salt & Water



Svetlana
Mojić Džakula,
CEO at Salt & Water

With the rising demand for yachts, waiting times for new builds have stretched to several years. As a result, more buyers are opting for pre-owned yachts, planning to refit them within a few months before setting sail. On the other hand, the growing competition in the charter market is pushing owners to upgrade their yachts more frequently. Every week a yacht spends in the shipyard, especially those commanding hundreds of thousands of euros per week, represents a significant financial loss.



Interior Renovation of 50m Motor Yacht, by Salt & Water



Yet, despite the best intentions, refit projects often face unexpected delays. If you're about to embark on a yacht refit, here are five essential strategies to help keep your project on track and within budget.

DEFINE THE PURPOSE OF THE REFIT

1.

Before making any decisions, clarify the primary goal of the refit. Was the yacht purchased in good condition and only needs minor updates to reflect the new owner's taste? Or has it endured years of heavy charter use and now requires a comprehensive refresh?

If time and budget are limited, focus on the changes that will deliver the most impact while being relatively straightforward to execute. If no work is planned for the yacht's underwater section, keeping it in the water can significantly reduce refit costs. Additionally, focusing on targeted, high-impact upgrades can make a noticeable difference without extending the project timeline.

Another key consideration: should all modifications be done at once, or would it be more practical to phase them over time, aligning with periods when the yacht is not in use?

CREATE A DETAILED WORK SPECIFICATION

2.

Before signing any contracts, develop a clear and detailed scope of work. While this may seem obvious, many refit projects suffer from continuous mid-project additions. These seemingly minor changes can cause major disruptions, delaying material orders, requiring reworked plans, and even undoing completed work.

Thorough preparation is key. Even before the yacht arrives at the shipyard, pre-ordering essential parts, custom furniture, and coordinating with engineering teams can streamline the process.

Also, if certain onboard items need to be temporarily removed, arrange proper storage in advance. I recall a case where a 25-meter yacht's refit was delayed by two weeks simply because no one had secured storage space for furniture and equipment.

Having a well-defined work plan won't guarantee perfection, but failing to prepare almost certainly guarantees setbacks.



Interior Renovation of 50m Motor Yacht, by Salt & Water



EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED.

Refit projects, especially extensive ones, often expand in scope as hidden issues emerge. However, an experienced refit team can anticipate many potential challenges before they arise.

What could go wrong? It's worth asking this question early. What if a critical part arrives damaged with a long lead time? Are alternative solutions available?

The more you prepare for these "what if" scenarios, the better equipped you'll be to handle them without derailing the entire schedule.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SHIPYARD AND TEAM.

Selecting the right shipyard or refit team is crucial. Ensure they have the expertise, workforce, and experience to handle your specific project. If possible, work with a team that has successfully completed refits on similar yachts, whether in size, age, or original builder.

No company can handle everything in-house, regardless of their marketing claims. Find out what aspects your main contractor manages directly and which ones they outsource. More importantly, have they worked with these subcontractors before, or is your yacht their first project together?

A skilled designer will not only present attractive concepts but also ensure that proposed materials and furnishings are practical, meaning they can be sourced, certified, and delivered on time.

BUDGET FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

Finally, always set aside extra funds beyond your initial budget.

No matter how well you plan, reality is unpredictable.

- Essential parts may arrive late or damaged.
- International shipments can get stuck in customs.
- A supplier may go out of business, forcing last-minute changes.
- A subcontractor may unexpectedly withdraw from the project.
- Key personnel may fall ill, delaying progress.

For these reasons, and many more, having a financial buffer is essential. When unexpected challenges arise, you'll have the flexibility to find solutions quickly, minimizing costly downtime.

By following these five strategies, you can dramatically improve the chances of a smooth, efficient refit - one that stays on schedule, within budget, and free of unnecessary stress.



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SAIL TO SHELTER

Transforming Elite Racing Sails into Life-Saving Shelters

How the sailing industry's retired sails are finding new purpose in humanitarian aid

When Angela Abshier, a self-proclaimed “textile junkie” and offshore sailing enthusiast, discovered that high-tech racing sails—some as large as soccer fields—were simply being thrown into landfills when they were decommissioned, she saw an opportunity. As the founder of Sail to Shelter, she's now transforming these engineering marvels into humanitarian shelter solutions worldwide.



“Nobody has really wanted to take this on before, because of the difficulties related to moving, deconstructing and stabilizing retired sail material,” Abshier explains. “But the value of the effort can be life sustaining.”

The European Opportunity

For the European yacht charter industry, particularly in the Mediterranean's bustling bareboat and charter markets, Sail to Shelter presents a unique opportunity to contribute to global humanitarian efforts while addressing a significant waste challenge. Stretching from the French Riviera to the Croatian coast, Europe's busiest sailing hubs retire thousands of sails annually — creating a huge opportunity for reuse and innovation. Currently, Sail to Shelter has 109 superyacht sails stored in Palma, Mallorca—one of Europe's premier yachting centers. The organization aims to establish key hubs around the world, with European ports playing a crucial role in this global network.

“The dream is that owners would contact me when they are ready to retire a sail, we would meet them at the dock, deconstruct and prepare them to be deployed wherever they needed to go,” says Abshier.

Unsplash



From Racing Circuit to Refugee Camps

Sail to Shelter repurposes high-performance racing and superyacht sails into durable shade and shelter structures for humanitarian and animal rescue efforts. These sails, typically discarded after one or two seasons despite their UV and water resistance, gain a second life aiding those in need.

The organization's current focus includes:

- superyacht sails and elite racing sails for maximum scale and durability
- sails in good condition (cloth should be fair to good quality)
- non-delaminated materials only

Addressing the Dacron Challenge

While superyacht sails are ideal for shelters, Dacron sails—common in charter fleets—pose a recycling challenge. To address this, Sail to Shelter partnered with NC State University to explore new uses for Dacron, such as blankets, building blocks, and flooring. “Not accepting Dacron sails felt like only solving half the problem,” says Abshier. The effort is especially relevant for fleets



like the J/70 class, where sails are replaced regularly. The organization is also collaborating with Clemson University to explore how maritime cities can repurpose retired sail materials.



Current Impact and Future Vision

The organization's most visible project is currently in Maui, helping communities devastated by the 2023 Lahaina wildfire. They've moved more than 25,000 square feet of superyacht sails to create shade solutions for temporary housing, animal shelters, and food distribution centers—while hiring local labor to support economic recovery.

Sail to Shelter's model minimizes environmental impact by matching regional sail donations with nearby areas in need. European sails might support refugee camps in Eastern Europe or disaster relief in the Mediterranean, while Caribbean sails could assist with hurricane recovery efforts.

Business Benefits for Charter Companies

For charter companies, yacht management firms, and sail lofts across Europe, participating in Sail to Shelter offers tangible benefits:

1. Environmental Leadership: Demonstrate commitment to sustainability by keeping sails out of landfills.
2. Tax Benefits: Donating sails could make you eligible for tax deductions – be sure to check your local regulations.
3. Industry Reputation: Position your company as a leader in the circular economy.
4. Practical Solution: Finally, a meaningful answer to “What do we do with old sails?”
5. Marketing Opportunity: Sustainability matters to your clients – let them know you're on the same course.

The process is straightforward: when scheduling a sail replacement or refit, companies contact Sail to Shelter to arrange collection. The organization handles all logistics of collection, storage, and deployment.

A Call to Action >>>>>>>>

With thousands of bareboat charters operating across the Mediterranean, each carrying multiple sails that will eventually need replacement, the yacht charter industry has a unique opportunity to lead in the second-use economy.

“We should all aim to make reusing retired sails endemic to sailing,” Abshier emphasizes. “I believe there’s enough compassion in the industry to make it work.”

For an industry that depends on the world's oceans and coastal communities, supporting Sail to Shelter represents more than good environmental practice—it's an investment in the resilience of the very communities that make global sailing possible.

Charter companies interested in organizing sail drives or establishing collection points in European ports are especially encouraged to reach out. As the organization seeks funding to scale operations, early supporters will be recognized as pioneers in this transformative initiative.

To donate sails or support Sail to Shelter's mission, visit [SAILTOSHELTER.ORG](https://sailtoshelter.org) or contact Angela Abshier at angela@sailtoshelter.com

About Sail to Shelter Founded in 2020, Sail to Shelter is a not-for-profit organization creating a global circular economy for retired racing sails by transforming them into humanitarian shelter solutions.



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