



The have... and The have yachts

WHILE IT HELPS TO HAVE YOUR SEA LEGS, KNOWING HOW TO SAIL IS NOT A PREREQUISITE TO HOPPING ON BOARD A LUXURY CHARTER YACHT FOR YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY. *Fiona Harper* FINDS OUT HOW TO ARRANGE YOUR OWN PRIVATE YACHT HOLIDAY.

WHETHER ANCHORING WITHIN A sparkling reef-fringed lagoon or partying dockside at the finest island restaurants, when boating it's definitely a case of the haves and the have yachts. But while it helps to have your sea legs, you don't actually need to be a sailor to enjoy a yachting holiday. Not when there's a full crew on hand.

Charter yachts come either fully crewed or bareboat. Bareboat refers to the absence of professional crew rather than a lack of creature comforts. However if you're going to charter a bareboat you'll need to know the difference between the pointy end (that's the bow) and the

blunt end (that's the stern) of a yacht. As the skipper you'll also be responsible for the crew and yacht's safety. If you can't imagine a sunset without sundowners and you don't want to stand accused of being the fun police, then a fully crewed charter is the way to go.

With a professional crew on hand to take care of all the pesky details like navigation and keeping everyone fed and hydrated, you'll likely be more concerned with other important issues - like which bikini to wear. Or how many dive sites to visit.

A yacht charter broker is your essential link to making the right

choices, smoothing the way for a seamless voyage. Any broker worth his or her salt will be able to recommend a range of enticing yachts to suit your particular desires. Let's face it, there's no point chartering a sailing yacht to explore Tahitian archipelagos (where ocean passages can get rough) if you get seasick in the bathtub. Or cruising the outer Great Barrier Reef if you're not into scuba diving.

Once you've found a broker, choosing your yacht and cruising location is where the real fun begins. In the southern hemisphere, the main cruising areas are Australian east coast, New Zealand and South Pacific islands. The Kimberley region is becoming increasingly popular too. Un-inhabited tropical isles or remote reef-fringed lagoons (Great Barrier Reef and Tonga)? Or charismatic harbour docks buzzing with an early morning vibe (Sydney, Hobart or Auckland)? Colourful islands rocking to rhythmic tunes (Fiji, Tahiti or Whitsunday Islands) drifting across a busy anchorage? Or forest-clad fjords (Marlborough or Milford Sounds) and inland waterways? Tropical or cool climate, it's your choice.

While some yachts are available for charter year round, others are only here during the summer, relocating to the northern hemisphere around April. Repositioning voyages (when a yacht is moved from one cruising region to another between seasons) are a novel way of undertaking an extended blue-water passage, but are definitely not for the seasick-prone.

Fully crewed yachts are usually chartered at a weekly base rate, either inclusive or non-inclusive. All-inclusive means standard food and beverages, ship's fuel and crew are included in the base rate. Non-inclusive means additional costs for provisioning, fuel, docking, crew gratuities, taxes and cruising permits (if applicable). As a guide, allow for an additional 5-15 per

cent for these sundries on top of the all-inclusive rates; and around 25 per cent for a non-inclusive rate. Expect also to find seasonal fluctuations in pricing.

When deciding on which yacht, you'll soon discover that the choice is almost overwhelming. An award winning super yacht like Kokomo III (58m) is perfect for sailing purists wanting to explore the South Pacific and New Zealand in style. MY Galaxy (26m) and MY Eendracht (36m) are based year round in North Queensland while Emerald Lady (34m) is based in Brisbane, island hopping the Queensland coast.

If you have the sailing skills to charter a bareboat, operators like Moorings have modern fleets based at Tahiti and Tonga, and there's a huge choice in the Whitsundays, though somewhat limited at the luxury end. Look for brands such



as Lagoon, Jeanneau or Dufour for superior catamarans and yachts in the 15 metre plus range.

Sitting somewhere between full luxury charter and bareboating is a crewed charter where you'll share the yacht with other guests. Often utilising spacious catamarans around 15m in length for their premium space and comfort, fully crewed charters come

with a skipper and chef/host.

A yacht charter is really all about having the luxury to explore and discover. As Mark Twain famously put it: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

How to indulge your inner seadog

YACHT CHARTER

Australian Superyachts: Sydney based yacht broker representing a boutique fleet of luxury yachts based in Australia and South Pacific. Superyachtcharters.com.au

Charter World: prominent global yacht broker acting for the best and biggest yachts worldwide. Charterworld.com

BAREBOAT CHARTER

The Moorings bareboat and crewed charter fleets are located in popular cruising destinations. Moorings.com

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