

sea & i

FOR CONNOISSEURS OF LUXURY TRAVEL

WINTER 2010

ITALIAN INNOVATION
News from the shipyards

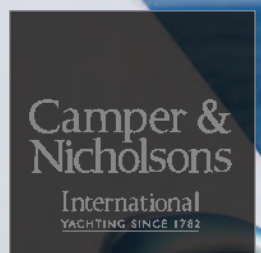
NECKER BELLE
Sir Richard Branson
reveals his latest venture

THE SOUND OF MUSIC
Demystifying on-board
entertainment systems

EXPLORE ON BOARD...
Mirabella V, Panthalassa
& Hurricane Run

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EDITORIAL

Innovation is always exciting, not just for the creative minds behind a project, but also for the world at large that's waiting in the wings for every new life-changing experience and product.

This issue, *sea&i* celebrates innovation in all its forms. We unveil the high-tech Panthalassa and discuss her unique design by Foster + Partners. Then, chatting to Sir Richard Branson, we reveal the entrepreneur's advances in the travel market, and ask him about his plans for his latest project, the catamaran Necker Belle. We also delve into the world of technology, where innovation has never been more dynamic, and we take a behind-the-scenes look at the Italian yards and the latest inspirations to hit the headlines. Along with updates on new launches, worldwide hotel openings and fresh ideas for travel, *sea&i* sets you up for an exceptional 2010. ■



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sea&i

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45m (148') Africa



53m (174') Leo Fun

(sea&i scenes)

News from around the world of luxury yachting

Photo: The Antique Wine Company

CNI Yachts – stars of the Monaco Yacht Show

The 45m (148') Africa from Sunrise Yachts hosted an evening in collaboration with the British Virgin Islands Tourism Board, and the 53m (174') Leo Fun served up cocktails following the Only Watch auction that took place on the Thursday evening of the show. The latter event gathered representatives from the 34 watch brands that took part in the auction (see sea&i issue 16). That generated over €2.8 million to benefit Research on Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) via the Association Monegasque Contre Les Myopathies, under the patronage of HSH Prince Albert II.

Leo Fun had been asked to host the event as Luc Pettavino, the organiser of the yacht show, appreciated her modern design, voluminous space and capacity to cater for a large number of guests. The yacht certainly proved to be a good choice as the guests – themselves experts in the art of combining technology with functionality and design – were highly complimentary.

A SOCIAL MONACO SHOW

As much as boat shows are about the yachts, they are also an excellent opportunity to wine, dine and refine one's knowledge on the latest yachting news. On the eve of the opening day of the show, CNI hosted the first of its social events at the Yacht Club de Monaco, in association with Banque

Jacob Safra SA. Over 450 clients and industry representatives tucked into champagne, cocktails and canapés. The following evening, in collaboration with Ulysse Nardin watches and Rolls-Royce Marine, CNI hosted clients aboard the 69.95m (230') Sherakhan. Guests were tested on their wine knowledge with tastings provided by the Antique Wine



69.95m (230') Sherakhan



Company, with the most accomplished connoisseurs winning a bottle of Château Haut-Brion.

Guests were also treated to a first-hand experience of the Ovei concept, enjoyed Alastair Gibson's extraordinary marine sculptures made out of F1 carbon parts, had a preview of the unique, handcrafted book from the BookWonderful collection L'Invenzione della Belleza displayed by Francesco Sandrini of the Marilena Ferrari Foundation (FMR), and admired Ulysse Nardin's latest masterpiece, Moonstruck, an astronomical timepiece that focuses on the system of Sun, Earth and Moon, providing an accurate depiction of the moon phase and the dynamics of tides.

Show-ing how it's done

For the fifth consecutive year, CNI again partnered with the Monaco Yacht Show organisers to make the event CarbonNeutral – an ongoing initiative to measure the levels of greenhouse gases produced by the show and off-setting them with dedicated environmental programmes.

This year, the two chosen renewable energy projects for the offset of the carbon dioxide are a hydropower plant in Beijing, China, and a cogeneration power plant that runs on agricultural residues at the Kurkumbh Bagasse factory in India.

Clockwise from top left: Stephen Williams, MD of The Antique Wine Company, with the winners of the Rothschild Fine Wine Challenge aboard the 69.95m Sherakhan, Max Bourgeois, Stephen Williams, Nasiba Adilova; guests enjoy the comfortable and relaxed environment of Sherakhan's main salon for a casual dinner amidst yacht show craze; Monaco Piranha with Monaco F1 GP track engraved, unique piece by Alastair Gibson; Ulysse Nardin's latest Moonstruck exclusively previewed onboard Sherakhan; Francesco Sandrini of FMR explains the creation of L'Invenzione della Belleza;



Art Basel

CNI, in collaboration with GenConnect, invited clients on board the 43.3m (142') motor yacht Pure Bliss, berthed at the Bayside Marina, for a private viewing of selected photography, sculpture and video installation art by contemporary artist Grant Bloodgood on Saturday 5 December, in conjunction with the Miami Art Basel contemporary art fair. The spectacular Flying Man in hand-blown glass and steel pictured above certainly made an everlasting impression while displayed on board the elegant 1997 Palmer Johnson available for sale and charter through CNI.

www.grantbloodgood.com; www.genconnect.com

CNI in St Barths

The Bucket is always a great excuse for large sailboat owners and their crews to get together and have fun on the stunning island of St Barth's, and following last year's successful sponsorship of the event, CNI has once again signed up for the 2010 Bucket on the 25 – 28 March. A sailing regatta which doesn't follow too many rules, the 2009 event saw a record entry of 35 superyachts over 30m (100') in length competing for the title, which was snapped up by the 51.5m (169') Meteor from Royal Huisman. Put the the date for 2010's event in your diary now.



FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW

CNI began the Fort Lauderdale boat show on an excellent note as before the show had even began CNI signed on an exciting new yacht listing for sale and charter, and were delighted to show her in our fleet. The 42m (138') Super Sport Fishing yacht Mea Culpa, built by McMullen & Wing, is now available on the market for the first time since her launch.

As in past years, CNI was delighted to welcome clients to its VIP lounges within the Bahia Mar Resort, with excellent food, drink and (crucial at the sweltering Fort Lauderdale Show) air conditioning. For the fifth consecutive year, CNI also hosted the pre-show captains' event. Traditionally a dinner, this year the chosen venue best lent itself to a party. One hundred guests filled Smith & Jones to capacity to enjoy a convivial evening, which included a live performance by local band Blue Fire.



Designing for the future

For the third consecutive year, CNI is delighted to announce that the World Superyacht Award's Young Designer Award competition is well under way. Together with the Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA), CNI aims to identify the world's most promising young superyacht designers and provide a platform for them to demonstrate their ability and talent. Entries from young naval architects and yacht designers from all over the world are already being received, and the judges (an esteemed group of world-class designers and industry leaders) will be looking out for innovation, technical feasibility, style and presentation. The prize for 2010 will be presented to the designer who produces the best concept design

for a superyacht, and the winner will be invited to receive the award at the World Superyacht Awards ceremony in London on 22 May 2010 – like Maila Speitkamp, the 2009 winner, who received hers (below) from Toby Walker from CNI (left) and Trevor Blakeley from RINA (right).





All you need to know

Inspired with cruising ideas and a stunning portfolio of yachts for the coming season, CNI's Charter Collection for 2010 will be out in the new year. Packed with more yachts than ever before, along with a guide to the world's most stunning cruising grounds, the CNI Charter Collection 2010 is the ultimate guide to the best that yachting has to offer. For your personal copy, please contact your CNI broker.

WORLD CHANGING

Inspired by the success of our Carbon Neutral efforts, CNI has been looking for another project to support a more environmentally friendly future – particularly with regard to climate and marine preservation. We were therefore delighted when the 4myPlanet team led by Alexia Barrier, a 30-year old racing sailor, and Lionel Péan, a veteran of the racing circuit, recognised our current initiatives and approached us to partner them in the development of their project. Alexia Barrier's goal to sail and race around the world single-handedly, collect essential scientific data to help understand and preserve the oceans, and get everyone to take part not only ticks all the boxes of what CNI hopes to achieve, it also has the potential to unite the whole yachting community. It is an initiative that will certainly appeal to yacht owners who have already suggested to us that they are keen to participate at various levels. Barrier, her team and their early supporters, including HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco (pictured below, with Alexia Barrier in the centre and Bernard d'Alessandri of Yacht Club de Monaco to her right) have huge vision, commitment and passion for the project, and CNI is delighted to be on board. www.4myplanet.eu



Dates & destinations

JANUARY

- 7-10** Phuket International Marine Expo, Thailand
- 8-17** London Boat Show
- 11-20** St Barth's Music Festival
- 23-31** Boot Düsseldorf 2010 41st International Boat Show
- 23-26** The Superyacht Cup Antigua
- 28-31** 26th Cartier Polo World Cup, St Moritz
- 29-2 FEB** Grenada Sailing Festival

FEBRUARY

- 11-15** Miami International Boat Show & Strictly Sail
- 18-21** Mumbai International Boat Show
- 7, 14 & 21** White Turf St Moritz, International Horse Racing
- 25-29** Abu Dhabi Yacht Show

MARCH

- 9-13** Dubai International Boat Show
- 16-19** MIPIM (Property), Cannes
- 25-28** Palm Beach Boat Show
- 25-28** St Barth's Bucket Regatta

APRIL

- 8-11** Vancouver International Boat Show
- 8-11** Antibes Yacht Show
- 8-11** The 15th China (Shanghai) International Boat Show
- 10-18** The 12th International Croatia Boat Show
- 15-18** Boat Asia, Singapore
- 24-30** 43rd Antigua Sailing Week
- 24-2 May** Palma International Boat Show

MAY

- 3-7** Genoa Charter Show
- 12-23** Cannes Film Festival
- 14-16** Monaco Grand Prix

A woman in a white dress and straw hat is swinging on a rope swing over a tropical beach. The background is a clear blue sky with some clouds and a palm tree branch in the top right corner. The text 'on (charter)' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

on (charter)

CNI welcomes a selection of recent launches to its charter fleet



PANTHALASSA

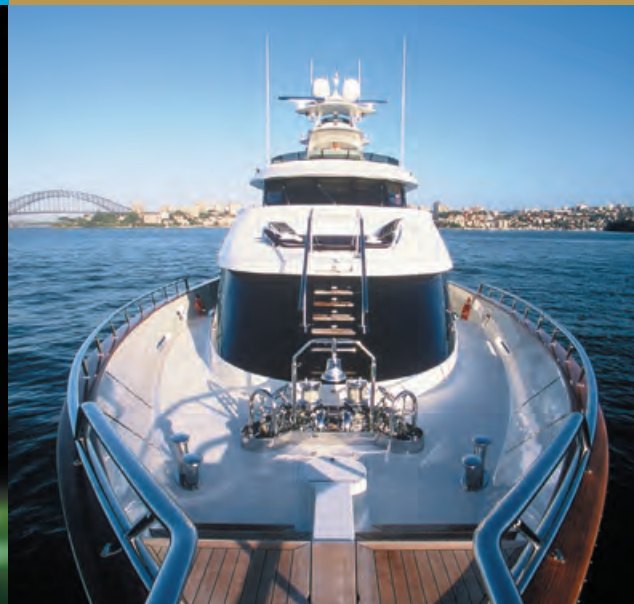
Launched to great acclaim from the renowned Perini Navi yard, Panthalassa is a fusion of contemporary living and the finest nautical heritage. From her naval architecture and engineering to the interior space planning, she combines 21st century innovation with intelligent design. She will be heading to the Caribbean for her first charter season in the new year.

- Length 56m (184')
- Guests 12
- Cruising area Winter: Caribbean Summer: Mediterranean
- Prices from €200,000 per week

MEA CULPA

Whether you are an avid sportfishing enthusiast or an active charterer, Mea Culpa is the perfect yacht for action and family cruising. She boasts a mahogany interior with accommodation for eight guests in four staterooms. She will be in the Bahamas over the coming months, before heading to the San Blas Islands in February, followed by the Panama Canal and Costa Rica in March.

- Length 42.3m (139')
- Guests 8
- Cruising area Winter: Bahamas & Central America
- Prices from US\$90,000 per week





NEVER ENOUGH

Showcasing at the Antigua Charter Show in December, the 42.67m (140') Never Enough will subsequently be available for charters in the Caribbean this winter. Refitted in 2007, she boasts a stunning contemporary interior with ample guest areas for entertaining and relaxing. She carries an array of water toys and has a large swim platform. Perfect for family charters, she sleeps ten guests in five staterooms.

- Length 42.67m (140') ■ Guests 10
- Cruising area Winter: Caribbean
Summer: Mediterranean
- Prices from US\$130,000 per week

CLEAR EYES

Due for launch in 2010, the cruising ketch Clear Eyes combines classic design lines with state-of-the-art rigging and technology, and she offers spacious volume for family charters. Sleeping 12 guests, she will be available in the East Mediterranean next summer.

- Length 39.3m (129')
- Guests 12
- Cruising area Summer:
East Mediterranean
- Prices from €65,000 per week





NORTHLANDER

The recently launched Northlander is a beautiful tri-deck motor yacht. She has an elegant and spacious interior with accommodation for ten guests in three double cabins and two twin cabins. Fitted with cherrywood and woven bamboo, leather detailing and wooden floors and shutters, she has a tropical feel. Northlander will be cruising the Mediterranean next summer.

- Length 38m (124')
- Guests 10
- Cruising area Summer: Mediterranean
- Prices from €90,000 per week

STELLA NOVA

Originally built for the prince of Sweden in the 1970s, Stella Nova spent the summers cruising in the Swedish archipelagos. Her rebuild in 2006 leaves her fresh, but has in no way compromised her original charm. She sleeps eight to ten guests in three double cabins and one twin cabin, plus a Pullman berth.

- Length 27.m (90')
- Guests 8-10
- Cruising area Winter & Summer: The Baltic
- Prices from €34,000 per week





Alternative destinations

CNI's Central Agency listings announce some exciting new locations for the forthcoming seasons



INDIAN OCEAN

The new 62m (203'4) Roma is heading to the Indian Ocean for charters this winter. Offering six staterooms, all equipped with the latest in entertainment equipment, she boasts an array of water toys for active guests and an abundance of entertainment and lounging areas for those wishing to relax while cruising the idyllic Indian Ocean. She will then be heading to Abu Dhabi in February, in time for the Abu Dhabi boat show.

Meanwhile, the 56m (184') Galaxy is in the Seychelles this winter. Sleeping 12 guests and with a crew of 14, this award-winning Benetti cuts an impressive figure on the waves and suits adventurous charterers wanting to explore the idyllic islands of the Indian Ocean. The Sultans Way 007 and 001 are also available in the Indian Ocean. Based in the Maldives, these yachts — 31m (101') and 30m (100') — know all the hidden areas to explore as they take you on a journey of discovery through the many deserted atolls.



56m (184') Galaxy

RED SEA

The 43m (141') Hana is the perfect charter yacht on which to relax and have fun while cruising from one port to the next. She is available in the Red Sea for charters this winter season. Sleeping 11 guests in four double cabins and one twin with Pullman berth, she is perfect for family charters with her swim platform and excellent range of water toys.



CENTRAL AMERICA

The 50m (164') sailing yacht Perseus is available in Central America this winter before heading to the South Pacific for the summer. She sleeps ten guests, has luxurious deck areas and boasts great sea-keeping qualities, as is to be expected from the renowned Perini yard. The aforementioned 42.3m (139') Mea Culpa will be heading to the San Blas islands in February, followed by the Panama Canal and Costa Rica in March. Meanwhile, the 35m (115') Aime Sea, has announced plans to cruise to the Galapagos and Central America next summer. Sleeping eight guests and with a crew of five, she is a stunning sailing yacht with a very comfortable interior and the performance of a maxi yacht.



35m (115') Aime Sea



SOUTH PACIFIC

The 32.3m (106') Carl Linné continues on her exploration and will be available in the South Pacific next summer. Designed for a comfortable sailing experience, her lifting keel allows her to go through shallow waters and visit places that other yachts cannot access.



WESTERN CARIBBEAN

The 64.5m (211'7) Silver Angel is available in the western Caribbean islands this winter. Cruising the ABCs (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) and Costa Rica, Silver Angel sleeps 12 guests in five double cabins and two twins.

spotlight on Hurricane Run

As owners of champion racehorses, the couple who commissioned Hurricane Run know all about speed and pedigree. Their new Feadship excels in both fields – being delivered a month early and boasting elite breeding

The third sistership in a family whose bloodline is studded with yachting greats like High Chaparral and Thunder Gulch, Hurricane Run was always odds-on to win in the style stakes. Built by Feadship, with naval architecture and exterior design by De Voogt Naval Architects, interior design by Terence Disdale Design, and project management by CNI’s Alex Lees-Buckley, this tri-deck motoryacht can’t put a single one of her 175 feet wrong.

The benefits of such an established team cannot be underestimated. Hurricane Run is meticulously designed to compliment her owners’ tastes and lifestyle, with everything from wall linings to lamps having been custom made exclusively for her. Lees-Buckley comments on the build, “Having had a wonderful experience the first time around with High Chaparral – a yacht that went on to prove herself as being first class in every respect – there was no reason in the owners’ minds to look elsewhere.”

But familiarity between the build team and owners has in no way stifled creativity. Hurricane Run’s design is bold and adventurous, and she has a striking monochrome interior displaying clean lines, flawless 18 curves and innovative features; a defiant departure from her sisterships. “We agreed on a clean and contemporary look, without using cornices or fancy mouldings,” explains Disdale. “Then I headed into my Aladdin’s cave of materials.” The esteemed designer (who collaborated with

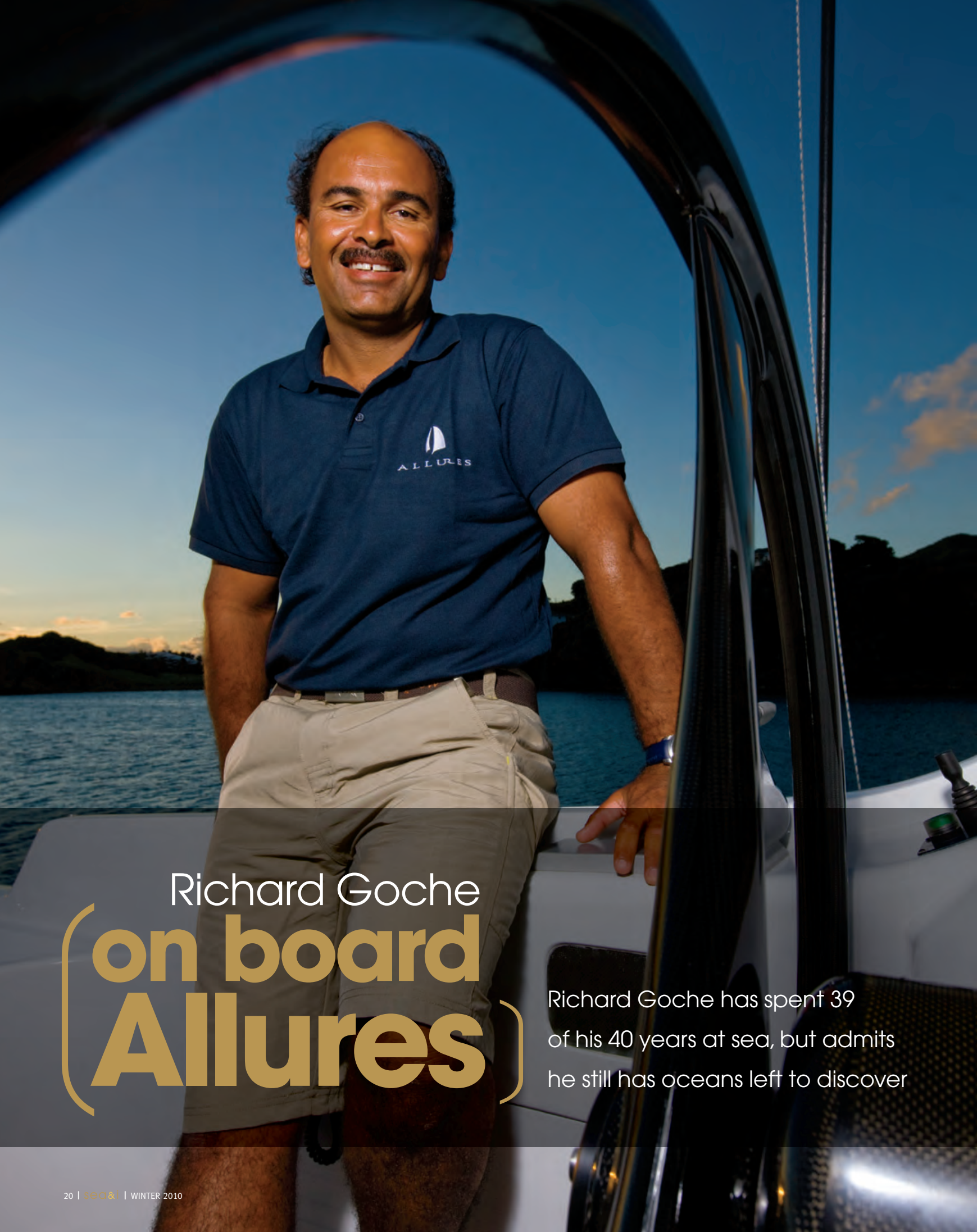
Feadship for the 12th time for this project) then conjured up an interior of earthy naturals, intriguing textures and sumptuous space.

Sleeping 12 guests and 13 crew, Hurricane Run has a gymnasium that converts to an extra cabin, a full-width upper deck saloon, an occasional/emergency helipad, and cutting-edge media and audiovisual systems thanks to the owners’ love of movies and music. Hurricane Run is available to charter in the Caribbean this season. ■

For information on chartering Hurricane Run, contact your CNI charter broker, see page 6

SPECIFICATIONS	
LENGTH	53.5m (175'5)
BEAM	10.3m (33'7)
DRAFT	3.4m (11')
BUILDER	Feadship
YEAR	2009
STATEROOMS	5/6
GUESTS	10/12
CREW	12
CHARTER GROUNDS	Caribbean
PRICES FROM	US\$320,000 per week





Richard Goche

(on board
Allures)

Richard Goche has spent 39 of his 40 years at sea, but admits he still has oceans left to discover

GOCHE ON... HIS BACKGROUND

I was born a few feet above sea level in Tahiti, and my childhood was spent surrounded by the Pacific Ocean; I think it seeped into my blood. My parents built and owned a yacht called Danae III. She was the first charter sailing yacht in Tahiti, so I completed my initial cruise as a crew member around the age of one. I decided early on to make yachting my life.

GOCHE ON... THE SUPERYACHT INDUSTRY

I have been involved with yachts for nearly 40 years. In the early days, people were drawn to work at sea because of their love of the ocean and the remarkable freedom and lifestyle it afforded. Today, that life can be very far from reality. Money comes first – how much you can make and how fast. Seamanship is becoming a rare quality. On the plus side, the profession is gaining respect, and being a captain or crew member is finally getting the professional recognition it deserves. One of the significant changes I'd like to see is a dedicated training school for crew. It's a real job with very special guests and circumstances, and a professional college would be fantastic preparation for a career at sea.

GOCHE ON... TRAVEL

My favourite cruising destinations are Sicily, Turkey, Croatia, the Galapagos, the East Coast of America and my homeland Tahiti. I haven't yet cruised the Indian Ocean or Norwegian Fjords, so they're on my wish list – as are Vietnam and the South Pole.

GOCHE ON... BEING A CAPTAIN

Boats are easy, they don't try to think for you; it's the crew that can make life a challenge. I'd advise anyone coming up through the ranks to be open-minded and always ready to revise their opinion and position. It's also important to

be a good communicator – you're not just a captain, you're a human being, and it's important that your crew appreciate that.

GOCHE ON... UNUSUAL CHARTERS

One of my most curious experiences was for a couple in Tahiti many years ago. They had chartered a yacht of which I was captain, and at 10am every day they would hand me a large amount of cash and ask me to disappear with the crew until 6pm. So we left them anchored in privacy on a sandbank in Bora Bora and went off to enjoy ourselves ashore – we were exhausted by the end of the week.

GOCHE ON... ALLURES

It is a real pleasure to work on Allures. She has a unique and innovative design and whips along at around 20 knots under sail, which is fun. If I could magically alter her, all I'd do is change her length to 39m (130') to give her expedition and world-cruising capacity. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH	30.3m (99'4)
BEAM	13m (42'6)
DRAFT	2.2m (7'2)
BUILDER	Composite Works, France
YEAR	2006
GUESTS	8
CREW	4/5
CRUISING AREA	Caribbean (winter); West Mediterranean (summer)
PRICES FROM	€55,000/week



Taste notes with...

Hamish Watson

charter cuisine

Miriam Cain catches up with the head chef of the 56m (183') Galaxy to talk about his mouthwatering breakfasts, lunches, dinners and treats

The one place you can be assured of inspired cuisine created with the individual in mind is aboard a superyacht, which is where you will find Hamish Watson, head chef on board Galaxy. A professional chef for almost a decade, Watson spent several years perfecting his skills before moving his creative talents off shore.

Watson initially went to university in Christchurch, New Zealand, where he studied for an advanced cooking degree, at the same time apprenticing at a premier hotel. After graduating, he spent two years at The George Hotel in Christchurch, where he was responsible for fine dining. He then transferred to the UK, working his way around London and perfecting various culinary specialities – from pastry to Japanese cuisine. “This was the perfect way for me to refine my cooking techniques,” says Watson. “But it was only when

a fellow chef mentioned the yachting industry that I realised there was another world out there for talented chefs.” After a stint as sous chef aboard the classic steam yacht Delphine, Watson joined Galaxy in 2006, again as sous chef. A few months into the season he was made head chef, and he has been garnished with awards and accolades ever since.

Watson embraces the concept of meal planning, often catching up with guests on a daily basis to refine choices for each meal, and adjusting menus according to changes in weather, activities or location. Watson loves the freedom that a yacht provides and excels in the challenges it presents.

SAMPLING LIFE ABOARD

“A typical day aboard Galaxy begins with a buffet breakfast of fruits, meats, cheeses, homemade muffins and breads, with the option of a bespoke hot breakfast,” Watson explains. “Lunches are usually a relaxed affair, with platters of meat and fish dishes, salads and freshly baked breads, allowing each guest to choose what, and how much, they want.” A favourite lunch dessert for Watson is something light, such as Champagne and berries. Dinners are typically three course affairs, and the night finishes with home-made chocolates laid on the guests’ pillows. Watson’s speciality dishes include his homemade sugar-free, low-fat muffins – a particular favourite among guests. “An added benefit of working on a yacht,” Watson concludes, “is that fresh fish is always on the menu. Depending on the catch of the day, I will prepare sushi and sashimi, seafood tasting platters, and fresh, homemade seafood pastas”.

Galaxy is available to charter with CNI. Sleeping 12 guests in six cabins, she has a crew of 15, including Watson and his sous chef.





MINI MENU: BEST OF BERRIES (SERVES 4)

STEAMED PUDDING

2 punnets blueberries, 100ml honey, 100g butter, 100g sugar, 2½ eggs, 100g flour, 1tsp baking powder

Cover the base of 4 dariole moulds with blueberries and 25ml of honey. Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs individually, then fold through dry ingredients. Add to moulds. Steam for 25 mins or until cooked.

WILD BERRY SHOOTER

100g each of strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, blackcurrants, 85g sugar, 8 black peppercorns, ¼ cinnamon stick, 2 star anise, 2 cardamom pods, 50ml Absolut raspberry vodka

Gently heat all ingredients until berries release liquid. Don't squash the berries, and avoid boiling. Allow to cool. Adjust flavour with sugar or water. Refrigerate.

LEMON CREAM

Zest of 4 lemons, 75ml lemon juice, 150g sugar, 100g butter, 150g eggs, 100ml whipped cream, 2 punnets blackberries

Bring the lemon zest, juice, sugar and butter to the boil. Pour onto eggs, return to heat, stir continuously until it boils. Immediately remove from heat and cool. Fold in the whipped cream.

Pour the wild berry shooter into shot glasses. Pour the lemon cream over the blackberries. Reheat the steamed pudding, and serve with sable biscuits.



mirabella V

SELLING THE DREAM

Laurent Perignon chats to Joe and Luciana Vittoria, the owners of Mirabella V, to get their take on sailing, selling, recessions and the ups and downs of the yacht industry

Joe and Luciana Vittoria have been fervent sailors for decades, and both were heavily involved in the build of Mirabella V. As such, they have a unique insight on their latest yacht, as well as the superyacht industry in general. *sea&i* took the opportunity to conduct a double interview, asking both Vittorias the same questions independently. Their answers define them as much as they reflect their approach to Mirabella V. While Joe Vittoria is a man of vision and projects, his wife has a very hands-on approach to yachting matters. The combination of their personalities is undoubtedly what secured the successful execution of such a unique project, and also confirms why they are soon to celebrate 50 years of happy life together.

Why the name Mirabella? Did you perhaps visit the Lorraine region in France and enjoy the fruit there?

JV: It is more Italian than French. It loosely translates as “beautiful vision”.

LV: Mirabella means “beautiful sight” or “she looks beautiful” in Italian, and as we’re of Italian origin we thought it was quite appropriate.

There has been a Mirabella I, II, III and V. What happened to IV?

LV: Joe didn’t like the acronym IV, as it means intravenous.

JV: I didn’t think IV would look nice on the transom.

What about Mirabella VI?

JV: Who knows?

LV: We now have several grandchildren to look after, so maybe it's time for being old and wise. But then, I'm not sure when Joe will ever be that!

Why sailing yachts? Would you ever consider a motor yacht project?

JV: I worked at a local yacht club as a teenager and fell in love with the sport at an early age. Sailing is an activity shared with nature while, to me, motoring is transportation.

LV: Motor yachts don't exist for us.

As successful entrepreneurs, what are your views on the benefits of an owners' association, and the way things work in the yachting industry?

JV: I think it would be useful to have such an association, especially when it comes to the charter business, but while it is a nice idea in theory I think, in reality, it would be quite difficult to bring several owners together. I've got nothing against established brokers, but there are many rogues out there who only think about their commission and who might try to sell you anything.

LV: There are things that need to be reconsidered, like the advance provisional allowance (APA). When rates are reduced in the current market, the APA reduces too, while the guests will still spend more or less the same amount of money as before. Having a straight percentage scale is not relevant. And there should be something in the MYBA contract about gratuity. The broker's commission could also be adapted to the duration of the charter. Why keep it at the same percentage when it's a longer period? There could be a tiered scale taking into account some sort of "volume discount".

From an owner's perspective, what is good and bad in boom years, and what is good and bad in times of recession?

JV: During the boom years, passion was discarded for profit with motor yachts being ordered and sold prior to delivery. Contraction is still happening and the market shrinking [as at the time of the interview, November 2009]. Now, in bad times, such excesses have caused many of the suppliers in the industry to fail. It is now a buyers' market, so I suppose it's not the best situation when you're selling, as we are. But there could be good things to come out of it.

LV: I believe it is the worst recession we've ever seen. And that's really not good for anyone.

How do you think the yachting industry will evolve? For instance, what will the trends be businesswise?

JV: I believe that we are still in the heart of the recession. Those who survive will come out stronger, that's for sure. With so many yachts on the brokerage market, several that are new, I'm not sure about who would build a new yacht today. We'll see things more clearly once the dust settles. However, looking at the way the travel business developed gives food for thought. Travel agents used to control the air travel business; now it's the airlines that control their business. Wholesale versus retail, charter brokers may have to rethink the environment they're in.

LV: I don't think the recession will change much in terms of industry practices – only the prices are changing. Everyone is playing off one against the other,

especially on the charter market. But it could help prompt some evolution to business practices in the future.

What about the evolution of the yachts, in both design and technology?

LV: That's really my husband's call.

JV: With the trend for environmental concern I tend to think that more people will look to sail given the difference in fuel consumption from a motor yacht to a sailing yacht. Admittedly, in recent times we have seen an effort in the industry and motor yachts are also becoming greener. Interesting technology, such as the use of photovoltaic cells, is emerging, but all of these still cost a lot of money and may not always be deemed worth it.

What makes Mirabella V dear to your heart? What is it like sailing her?

LV: When sailing on Mirabella V, all your troubles are forgotten. Of all the sailing experiences I've had in my life, I've never felt this as strongly as when I'm sailing her. She's unique and thrilling in all aspects.

JV: She's a one-off project that will always be one of the highlights of my life. Sailing her is outstanding. The upwind performance is way beyond most other mega sailing yachts, and yet the creature comforts are of motor yacht proportions. Even motoring her is far more comfortable than an equivalent motor yacht. Guests have frequently commented that while on board, they don't feel any motion sickness for the first time in their sailing experience.

If you were to do the same project again, what would you change?

JV: I'd do it all the same but I would have drum winches – that's all. And I'd use composite rigging, as the technology has improved considerably since we built our mast.

The final question: why are you selling?

LV: Joe tends to lose interest once he's completed a project and has reached sailing fulfillment. Besides, she's been highly successful chartering, so we haven't had too many occasions to step on board for the past year.

JV: I've had the greatest adventure in my life creating Mirabella V. I have sailed her extensively and enjoyed the thrill of her speed and comfort. There is no more I could gain from any new experience; and selling her will allow me to dream once again. ■

Mirabella V is for sale through CNI broker Georges Bourgoignie, assisted by Bill Sanderson, and can be chartered through your CNI charter broker.

SPECIFICATIONS	
LENGTH	75.2m (246'9)
BEAM	14.8m (48'6)
DRAFT	4m (13'1)
BUILDER	Vosper Thornycroft
YEAR	2004
STATEROOMS	7
GUESTS	12
CREW	15

where in the world...

sea&i brings you the latest luxury travel news



TRACK BACK THROUGH TIME

More than anyone in history, India's Maharajas knew how to live life with a flourish, and the new Maharajas' Express train, due to embark in January 2010, does this ancient regal institution great honour. The train offers an exceptional travel experience as it sweeps through the Indian countryside on four very distinct itineraries. These include highlights like lunching at the Maharaja of Bikaner's private hunting lodge, a visit to an elephant polo match, and a boat trip on the holy Ganges to see the sunrise at Varanasi. While on board the Express, guests have a choice of 20 opulent suites, 18 junior suites, four main suites and a one-carriage Grand Presidential suite. There is also an observation carriage with its own bar, games table and club armchairs, two restaurants, and princely furnishings throughout. Celebrity chefs and guest lecturers add the finishing touch to your seven or eight-day journey. www.rirtl.com

Centenary celebrations

Arriving at The Goring Hotel is like visiting a comfortable, if rather grand, English country house in the heart of London's Belgravia, which is as it should be as this most welcoming of hotels is the only five-star property in London that is still in family ownership. What is more, it has been in the same family since it was opened by the anglophile German Otto Goring in 1910. The fourth Goring to run the hotel now leads the centenary celebrations. It is an anniversary that will be celebrated by hundreds of former visitors, as surely all those who have experienced the hotel's mixture of warmth, charm and eccentric style will be hoping it will celebrate another 100 years.

www.thegoring.com



THOMPSON IN TORONTO

Super-cool Thompson Hotels is taking its success beyond the USA to open its doors in Toronto, Canada next March. The 100-room hotel, with interiors by Studio Gaia and Estudio Mariscal, will have a fabulous restaurant, an exclusive 24-hour burger bar, a roof-top infinity pool, and a members' bar with views over Toronto's fashion and design district. A nightclub, winter ice-rink (convertible to summer dining area), 40-seat cinema and ballroom add to the attractions. The new Toronto hotel joins the brand's five New York properties, two LA hotels, and Donovan House in Washington DC. www.thompsonhotels.com



Ritz-Carlton goes eco

It is busy times for the Ritz-Carlton, as the hotel chain celebrates three openings. In October, it launched its first eco hotel with 146 technically advanced rooms, a penthouse wellness centre and an aqua lounge with a saline-treated pool. Gracing the uptown district of Charlotte in the US, the eco hotel scores on numerous levels environmentally, from the vegetated roof that insulates the 18-storey building, to its recycling policies and sustainable ingredients. The chain is also opening a \$300 million resort in Lake Tahoe (left) in Northern California, just in time for the ski season. Finally, the first Ritz-Carlton Reserve property (above left) is set to launch in Abu Dhabi in the Middle East. The Reserve concept — a new venture for the company — offers one-of-a-kind boutique resorts in secluded, exclusive locations around the world.

www.ritzcarlton.com

NEWS IN BRIEF...



Art in Miami

The most important art show in the US takes places on 3-6 December. Art Basel Miami is the sister event of Switzerland's prestigious Art Basel. The Miami show combines an international selection of top galleries with special exhibitions, parties and music, film and design events. www.artbaselmiami.com



English retreat

A new hotel has opened just outside London in England's idyllic New Forest. Lime Wood is a luxury country-house hotel and invites guests to consider it their own home — albeit one with a Michelin-starred chef and a luxury spa, which is due to open in 2010.

www.limewoodhotel.co.uk

Snow mean feat

Thrill-seekers should sign up now for the Cain's Quest Snowmobile Endurance Race on 13-20 March. For the hardcore only, it involves over 2,500 kilometres (1,500 miles) of racing across frozen lakes, woods and deep snow in Newfoundland and Labrador, in Canada. www.cainsquest.com

Re-Orient yourself

After a 20-month renovation, the Mandarin Oriental Jakarta (below) has reopened in the Indonesian capital. The 272-room property now has 56 oversized rooms and six suites, four new restaurants, a fitness centre and an outdoor pool.

www.mandarinoriental.com



New stores open doors

Haute designer Louis Vuitton will launch stores in both Lebanon and Mongolia before the year is out. It has also opened its first global store in Dubai. Meanwhile, its flagship boutique at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, will be enshrined in a glass and steel crystal pavilion that appears to float on water. This is due to open next year.

www.louisvuitton.com

City of Dreams

The Grand Hyatt Macau at the Chinese island's City of Dreams resort is now open and offers 791 rooms. The luxury complex will primarily be used for business travel and events.

www.hyatt.com



Manhattan double

New York is looking forward to welcoming a new 144-room hotel to its fashionable Bryant Park area in Midtown Manhattan early in the new year. Andaz Fifth Avenue has factory style sash windows reflecting an old-style New York, while graphic artwork represents the modern city. This arrival is joined by another new Andaz property opening in early 2010: Andaz Wall Street, a 253-room hotel in Lower Manhattan. One of the latest creations of the award-winning architectural design firm The Rockwell Group, it is sophisticated, luxurious and the perfect venue for impromptu socialising. www.andaz.com

THE BEIRUT RIVIERA

Capitalising on Beirut's growing reputation as the Riviera of the Middle East, CampbellGray Hotels is making its mark in the area with its new Le Gray hotel. Promising the same service as its Caribbean sister Carlisle Bay, and London successes One Aldwych and Dukes Hotel, Le Gray is set in the smart Beirut Central District in the heart of the city, close to shopping and entertainment offerings. Among its 87 rooms and suites it has two presidential suites with private terraces. It also has a rooftop restaurant with views of the Mediterranean and Mount Lebanon. A Cigar Lounge, PureGray Spa, state-of-the-art gym and outdoor swimming pool ensure complete relaxation.

www.campbellgrayhotels.com



WORLD CUP WINNER

With the football World Cup gracing Johannesburg next year, South Africa is going all out to impress with a month-long, luxury safari camp just outside the city. Camps at the Cradle of Humankind will be located in 7,500 acres of privately owned land where they are equidistant to the football stadiums of Johannesburg, Pretoria and Rustenburg.

Between 10 June and 12 July 2010, guests can stay at one of the four camps, each with 12 luxury canvas tents, en-suite

bathrooms and 64-inch plasma televisions. There will also be a party and entertainment camp with a video wall for watching the matches, and a relaxing sundowner deck overlooking the hills of The Cradle — a UNESCO World Heritage site containing a dozen limestone caves filled with plant and animal fossils. Game drives and walking safaris are available for less football-inclined guests. Helicopter and chauffeur-driven transfers can also be arranged from the camps to the football matches. www.cazenoveandloyd.com



The Majlis, Lamu

Just off Kenya's northern coast, the idyllic Manda Island in the Lamu archipelago offers a new boutique hotel called The Majlis. The hotel's 25 unique rooms feature hand-carved timber and white coral, a private art collection, and terraces with views of the beach, gardens or forests. A thatched restaurant and two bar areas offer tempting food and refreshments, and two pools provide welcome relief from the African sun. The hotel also has two light aircraft for local excursions and airport transfers. www.themajlisresorts.com

Hong Kong highlight

The Hullett House (built in 1884 and one of the oldest government buildings in Hong Kong), has a new lease of life as a venue for a boutique hotel, restaurants, a mall and cultural spaces. In the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui, this historic building blends the best of old and new. www.hulletthouse.com



Barcelona's best

Following its €20million (\$29.5million) refurbishment, the Hotel Palace Barcelona (above) — previously the Ritz Barcelona — has just reopened three of its floors. This January the rest of the hotel will be unveiled to further fanfare.

www.hotelpalacebarcelona.com

W Hotels sets trends

W Hotels is launching its own clothing and jewellery line. Global Glam will feature fashions by new and known designers and will initially be sold in W properties in downtown Manhattan, Miami, Chile, Hong Kong and Istanbul.

www.whotels.com



VICEROY GOES INTERNATIONAL

The Caribbean island of Anguilla has recently been embellished with a new hotel — Viceroy Anguilla Resort & Residence: the first of the Viceroy brand of hotels to go international. Viceroy Anguilla is set in 35 acres and comprises 166 beachfront and bluff-top villas, sophisticated town homes and opulent resort residences. Driftwood lamps, travertine marble floors, hand-carved wood sculptures and beaded African artwork lend an eclectic feel, while the Sunset Lounge and Cobà restaurant take care of gourmet requirements. A waterside spa and fitness centre add to the resort's attractions.

www.viceroyanguilla.com

New to The Strip

It's a city known for its remarkable hotels, but Vegas is nevertheless hyped about the arrival of its latest 47-storey property — the Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas. In the heart of The Strip, it has 392 guests rooms and suites, an holistic spa and a 23rd-floor sky lobby that's described as "an oasis of oriental calm". As such, it caters for the traveller wanting all the buzz and bright lights of Vegas, with the option of escaping it all in luxury. Mandarin Oriental is also due to open doors in Barcelona in Spain. Located on the city's famous Passeig de Gràcia, the new hotel occupies a mid-20th century building and has a stylish contemporary interior. www.mandarinoriental.com





Back to Black Legend

Supper in the glamorous city of Monaco just stepped up a notch with the opening of Black Legend. Echoing the spirit of Motown music, this restaurant, lounge bar and disco is situated near

the Monaco Yacht Club and will transport guests back in time with live music, an exclusive private club ambiance, a huge terrace with harbour views and vintage and modern décor that

reflects Manhattan in the 1970s. Opening night in October set the standard with special guest appearances by The Supremes and Martha Reeves and The Vandellas. www.black-legend.com



TUSCAN TREASURE

On the sloping hills of Fiesole, moments from Florence, a 15th century villa invites guests to enjoy a privileged hotel experience. Il Salviatino is set in 11 acres of Tuscan gardens and the 61 rooms and suites, each individually designed, are appropriately laced with frescoes, handcrafted leathers, marble fireplaces, works of art and ancient mosaics. The penthouse suite is in the villa's

tower, and has its own external plunge pool, intimate terrace and breathtaking views of Florence and the surrounding countryside. A day spa is tucked away in the terraced gardens, along with a pool and fitness centre, and the restaurant offers fine Florentine gastronomy from a chef with Michelin-starred experience.

www.salviatino.com

SPA SHOWCASE



FOUR RITES FOR FOUR SEASONS

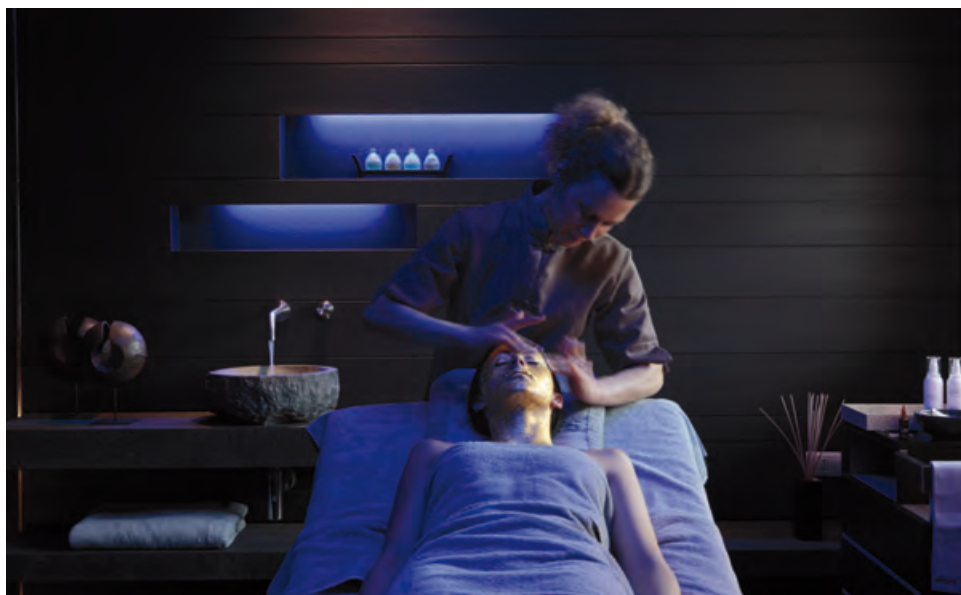
The Four Seasons Hotel Shanghai, China, invites guests to escape the stress of the city in its new Qin The Spa. There are nine treatment rooms in which therapists deliver intriguingly named treatments inspired by traditional rites and healing methods from the four celestial seasonal guardians in the birth of Chinese medicine. These include Green Dragon Spring Rites, Red Phoenix Summer Rites, White Tiger Autumn Rites and Black Tortoise Winter Rites. They encompass such compelling treats as a foot massage with warmed bamboo sticks, a peach blossom and tangerine wrap, a shower of wild orchid and ruby infused face and body mist, and lotus blossom and gold-infused massage oil. www.fourseasons.com

Koh Kood's so good

Languishing on one of Thailand's most stunning islands, and promising only eco-responsible materials to honour its natural surroundings, the new Six Senses Soneva Kiri on the remote island of Koh Kood opens as [sea&i](http://sea&i.com) goes to press. It has 29 pool villas, watersports activities and a 'hovering over the forest canopy' kids' club. But the spa is the primary focus, with 11 double treatment rooms, personalised sensory spa journeys, lifestyle programmes and spectacular views. Try the Jungle Escape – two and a half hours filled with a fresh herbal scrub, outdoor bamboo-mist shower and a Thai herbal massage. www.sixsenses.com/soneva-kiri

SATURNIA SUCCESS

The Saturnia Spa & Golf Resort in the heart of the Tuscan Maremma region of Italy has introduced a luxury spa area called Blackrose — a private world to supersede all other spa experiences. Treatments range from a Candle Massage to a Raindrop Massage, Four Hand Massage and Gold Facial. This new area adds to the spa's existing facilities, with its staff of 33 therapists and five medical doctors, and a 3,000-year-old thermal pool. The resort recently received double honours, having been named a winner in the Favourite Resort/Hotel Spa Europe category of *SPA* magazine. It was also named Best Spa in Europe in the annual online SpaFinder Readers' Choice Award Competition. www.termedisaturnia.com



GRAND DESIGNS

Following the multi-million-euro revamp of the Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat in France, the belle époque hotel introduces Le Spa. Designed by Pierre-Yves Rochon, Le Spa is a spacious haven with six treatment rooms, a Spa Garden with sea views and a sundeck terrace, and five garden treatment cabanas. The menu includes a range of therapeutic and beauty procedures, scrubs and massages using products inspired by Mediterranean traditions. Le Spa also has a gym, counter-current pool, hydrotherapy circuit, steam rooms and saunas, and a room designed for Gyrotonic: an exercise technique that integrates the principles of yoga, dance, gymnastics and Tai Chi to strengthen and increase the body's flow of energy.

www.grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com



essential fragrance Parfum fatal

The scents to spritz this season are a heady cocktail of exotic florals, warm spice, sweet berries and citrus zests. Designer style comes guaranteed with these new blends...

1. JEAN-CHARLES BROSSEAU OMBRE ROSE Eau de Parfum, 100ml
Sweet tones of iris, lily of the valley, ylang ylang, honey, rose, vanilla, peach, sandalwood and musk.

2. CREED AQUA FIORENTINA Eau de Parfum, 75ml
Plum and greengage top notes with florals, bergamot, Calabrian lemons, cedar wood and sandalwood.

3. NINA RICCI RICCI RICCI Eau de Parfum 80ml
Uplifting scents of bergamot and rhubarb zest with pretty florals, sandalwood, patchouli and belle de nuit.

4. NINA RICCI CRISTAL D'OR Eau de Parfum, 15ml
A limited edition, delicate fragrance of carnations, gardenia, rose, jasmine, spicy musk, sandalwood and iris root.



5. MICHAEL KORS VERY HOLLYWOOD Eau de Parfum, 100ml
Mandarin and iced bergamot blend with jasmine, ylang ylang, raspberry, gardenia and amber.

6. MARC JACOBS LOLA Eau de Parfum, 100ml
A warm floral bouquet merging fuschia, peony, pink peppercorn, pear d'anjou and ruby red grapefruit.

7. CHOPARD CASCADE Eau de Parfum, 75ml
At its heart is belle de nuit, along with pink pepper, grapefruit flower, mandarin, evening maiden orchid and heliotrope.

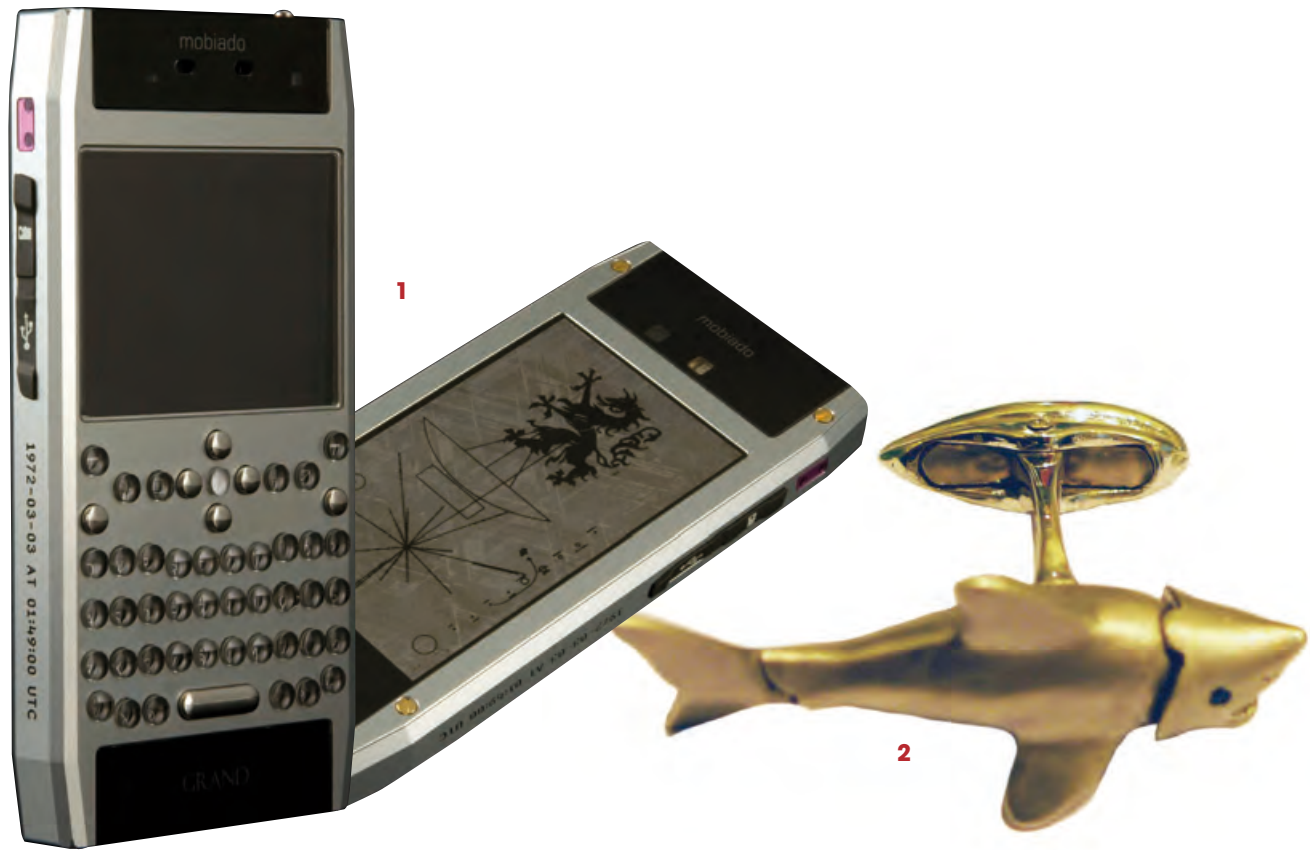
8. JO MALONE VANILLA & ANISE Cologne, 100ml
Rare vanilla orchid blossoms, Sicilian bergamot, Tunisian neroli, Madagascan clove, white amber and vanilla bourbon absolute.

9. AQUA DI PARMA MAGNOLIA NOBILE Eau de Parfum, 100ml
Zesty, floral and sweet thanks to a subtle blend of magnolia, bergamot, lemon, rose and sandalwood.

10. CARON CRYSTAL Perfume travel amphora
A glamorous set of travel-sized perfume decanters encrusted with thousands of crystals. Decant one of Caron's classic perfumes, or fill with your own signature fragrance.

11. PRADA L'EAU AMBRÉÉ Eau de Parfum, 80ml
An intricate and fresh approach to balancing notes of citron, May rose and amber.

12. LALIQUE ENCRE NOIRE POUR ELLE Eau de Parfum, 100ml
Sicilian Bergamot, Indonesian amber, freesia, Turkish rose, osmanthus, kephalis, Haitian vetyver, Texan cedar and musk.



gift guide The present climate

It's the time of year to think of gifts; so whether you're buying for someone else, or compiling a wish list for yourself, these essentials are perfectly sized to take onboard



1. PHONE HOME

NASA's Pioneer 10 spacecraft is honoured in Mobiado's Grand 350 Pioneer mobile phone – which has a limited edition run of just 37; one to mark every year since the NASA spacecraft launched. www.mobiado.com

2. OFF THE CUFF

From elegant and traditional to bold and modern to irresistibly witty, luxury goods store William & Son has 18ct gold cufflinks for every occasion. www.williamandson.com

3. THE WRITE STUFF

For that personal touch, only a handwritten note will do, so get to grips with the unique, handcrafted pencils and pens from William & Son. www.williamandson.com



4



5



6



7

4. TIME FOUR REFLECTION

To celebrate its prestigious history, Zenith has launched its Milestones Box Set with four of its leading timepieces – dating back to 1955 – presented in a bespoke limited-edition leather box by Smythson. www.thewatchgallery.co.uk

5. SOUNDS GOOD

Linn is known for its groundbreaking digital sound technology, but it is also celebrating the past with its new heritage Majik LP12, first made 35 years ago. www.linn.co.uk

6. SCENT FIRST CLASS

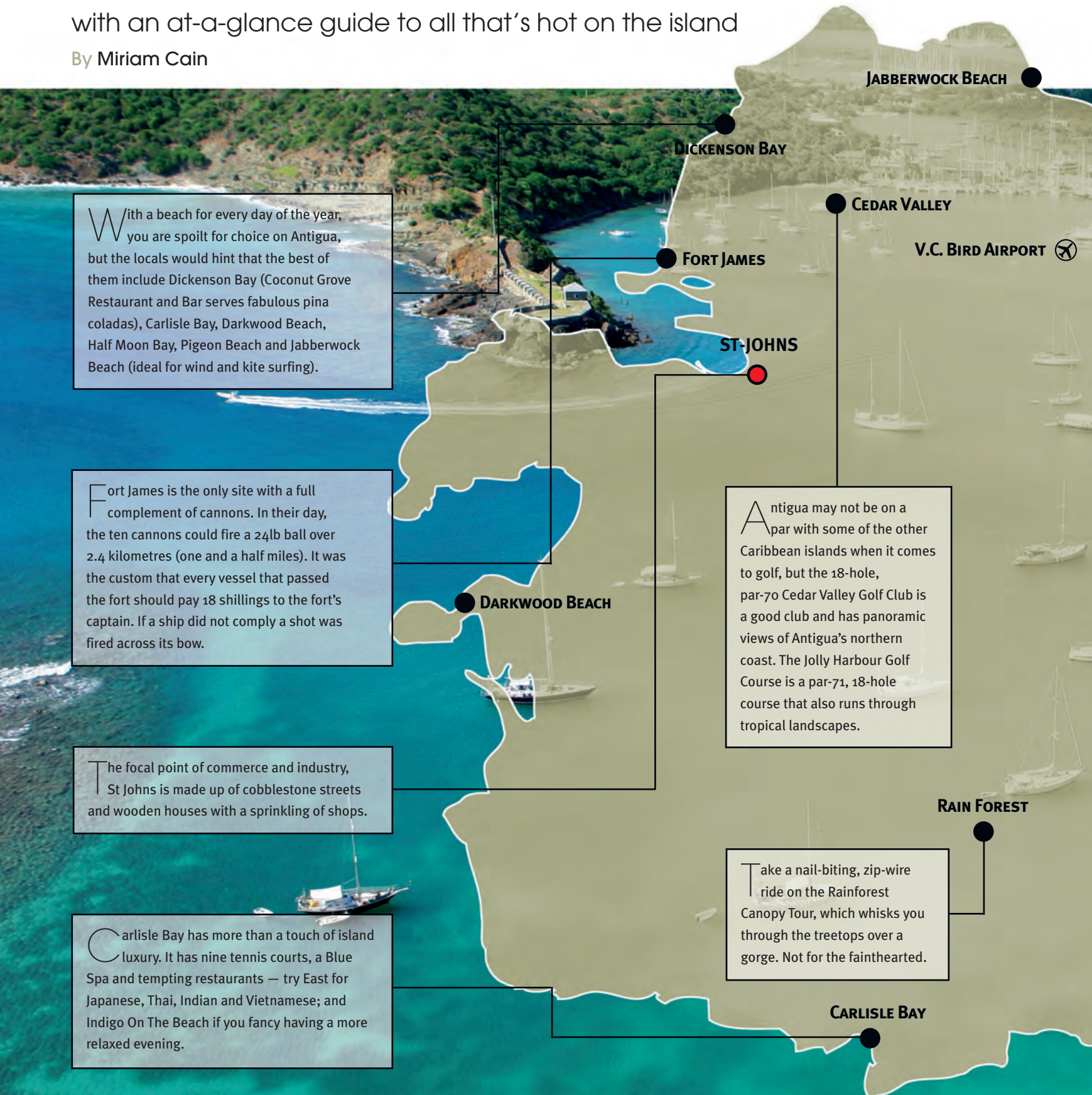
Nasomatto's Black Afgano, Extrait de Parfum 30ml. A radical and unique scent, Black Afgano evokes the effects of temporary bliss. An inky black fragrance for the modern man. www.nasomatto.com

7. LEADER OF THE PACK

Business, travel and everyday toting always makes a statement with an Aspinal of London bag. www.aspinaloflondon.com

With 365 sugar-white beaches, Antigua has secured itself a pole position on the Caribbean cruising map. sea&i seeks out the best of the highlights with an at-a-glance guide to all that's hot on the island

By Miriam Cain



JABBERWOCK BEACH

DICKENSON BAY

CEDAR VALLEY

V.C. BIRD AIRPORT

FORT JAMES

ST-JOHN'S

DARKWOOD BEACH

RAIN FOREST

CARLISLE BAY

With a beach for every day of the year, you are spoilt for choice on Antigua, but the locals would hint that the best of them include Dickenson Bay (Coconut Grove Restaurant and Bar serves fabulous pina colodas), Carlisle Bay, Darkwood Beach, Half Moon Bay, Pigeon Beach and Jabberwock Beach (ideal for wind and kite surfing).

Fort James is the only site with a full complement of cannons. In their day, the ten cannons could fire a 24lb ball over 2.4 kilometres (one and a half miles). It was the custom that every vessel that passed the fort should pay 18 shillings to the fort's captain. If a ship did not comply a shot was fired across its bow.

The focal point of commerce and industry, St Johns is made up of cobblestone streets and wooden houses with a sprinkling of shops.

Carlisle Bay has more than a touch of island luxury. It has nine tennis courts, a Blue Spa and tempting restaurants — try East for Japanese, Thai, Indian and Vietnamese; and Indigo On The Beach if you fancy having a more relaxed evening.

Antigua may not be on a par with some of the other Caribbean islands when it comes to golf, but the 18-hole, par-70 Cedar Valley Golf Club is a good club and has panoramic views of Antigua's northern coast. The Jolly Harbour Golf Course is a par-71, 18-hole course that also runs through tropical landscapes.

Take a nail-biting, zip-wire ride on the Rainforest Canopy Tour, which whisks you through the treetops over a gorge. Not for the fainthearted.

antigua

ISLAND SNAPSHOT

Antigua has transformed itself from a poverty-stricken island of sugar plantations to a bustling holiday hub, but the rolling landscapes are still dotted with memories of its past — the stone towers that were once sugar mills. Catch a glimpse of that era in its heyday at Betty's Hope. This site was the first sugar plantation on the island, and today you can visit the ruins and the original windmills.

BETTY'S HOPE

Bracadabra's in English Harbour is always jumping. Serving fresh seafood early on, the night becomes a dance party as live jazz, reggae and often carnival costumes take over. The nearby Admiral's Inn is a quieter affair, with great daiquiris and local steel bands at the weekend. The Life Bar is also a favourite haunt of yachting crowd, whilst the pub Mainbrace, at the Copper and Lumber Store, serves fish and chips and, on some evenings, they have a jazz band.

Many of the beaches have calm waters that make them great for snorkelling and the reefs that fringe Antigua are home to brilliantly coloured fish.

There is plenty of big-game fishing off shore, where wahoo, tuna and marlin abound.

The restored Georgian naval dockyard is at the centre of the Nelson's Dockyard National Park, which has become the world's most visible symbol of England's powerful navy in the West Indies. Nelson commanded the British navy in the Leeward Islands from 1784 to 1787 and made his headquarters at English Harbour, which became home to the British fleet. The colonial naval buildings remain as they were then. Today, nature trails with coastal views abound in Nelson's Dockyard National Park. For the best panoramic views, take the walk from English Harbour to Shirley Heights, beginning at Galleon Beach.

Shirley Heights jump-up is the place to be on Sunday afternoons. The session begins with a barbecue at 4pm and continues with reggae, steel-pans and lots of dancing. Arrive early for sundowners and enjoy the sunset over English Harbour.

HALF MOON BAY

PIGEON BEACH

ENGLISH HARBOUR

NELSON DOCKYARD

SHIRLEY HEIGHTS

Emirate of interest abu dhabi

Abu Dhabi is an intriguing oasis of disparity, where east meets west and past meets present, making it one of the most dynamic cities on the globe

By Kate Rigby

With a pleasing twist of fate, Abu Dhabi has, in a sense, come full circle. Originally a hub of the pearl industry, it is now the jewel of the Middle East – being the largest of the seven emirates and the most important cultural city in the UAE. It is to its credit that amid such acclaim, and while embracing enormous change, it still remains faithful to its roots. Traditional wooden dhows used for pearl fishing still line the harbour; only now they front a somewhat incongruous Manhattan-like skyline. But therein lies this city's charm – it is a place where anything is possible.

Opposite page: Shangri-La Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri
Below: Traders Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri

Pillow talk

The **Abu Dhabi Emirates Palace** stakes the heady claim of being one of the leading five-star hotels in the city, reassuring news for its investors as it is rumoured its build cost was a staggering US\$4billion. It is not without competition, though. The new **Traders Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri** recently opened (sister to the existing, sumptuous **Shangri-La Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri**), and a further 29 hotels with 7,000 rooms are planned for the Saadiyat Island development over the next few years. But for now it is **Yas Hotel** on Yas Island that is claiming the headlines. It has an 18-hole championship golf course and views of the Yas Marina and Yacht Club, a Crown Prince Court comprising 12 rooms, and a Ruler's Court with two presidential suites and 28 bedrooms. Further afield, the five-star resort **Qasr Al Sarab** opened only weeks ago in the Liwa desert. Opt for its royal villas.

Eat, drink, dance

Nightlife in Abu Dhabi is a cocktail of your own creation. You can take a stroll in a park, watch a rock band, dance in a nightclub, take in a concert, art exhibition or show, or hit the gaming centres and late-night shopping malls. Almost all pubs, nightclubs and bars are located inside the five-star hotels.

EAT... Food ranges from Arabic to Far-Eastern, European, Latin and Continental. Buffets abound around the Breakwater, Sheikh Zayed Street, Corniche Road and Tourist Club area, where →







AT A GLANCE...

Best travel time: year-round sun

Currency: dirham (Dhs or AED)

Language: Arabic, although English is widely spoken

Culture: this is one of the most modern, sophisticated, wealthy and dynamic cities in the world. Arabic hospitality excels here. The emirate is more tolerant than most, but dress code remains conservative. Sport, culture and shopping are high on the agenda.



This page, clockwise from top left: Qasr Al Sarab; the pearl and caviar restaurant at the Shangri-La Hotel, Qaryat Al Beri; the spa at the Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi; the Abu Dhabi Golf Championship; Sheikh Zayed Mosque

you will find some of the best restaurants tucked in the lobbies of the four- and five-star hotels.

DRINK... One place you must visit is an Arabic coffee shop for a traditional shisha (also known as a hookah or hubbly-bubbly). Try **Havana Café** at Breakwater; **Al Finjan** at Le Meridien, **Al Ain** at the Heritage Village and the **Hiltonia Club** at the Hilton Al Ain.

DANCE... International DJs rock the clubs. Spend an evening at **Tequilana Discotheque** – its interior is adorned with tiny huts and palm trees, all housed inside Hemingway's Complex on the West Corniche beach.

See, shop, savour

SEE... You'll have to wait until 2012 to see the spectacular **Art Louvre Abu Dhabi** museum (a multi-million-dollar showcase bridging eastern and western art), but in the meantime the **Emirates Palace** plays host to world-class exhibitions in its Gallery One. The **Bateen Shipyard** is the place to see traditional craftsmen building wooden dhows; the **Sheikh Zayed Mosque** – the third largest mosque in the world –

provides an impressive photo opportunity; the **Camel Market** is a unique souk at which to absorb local life; and **The Corniche** is a tranquil park-lined coastal boulevard.

SHOP... Situated near the Abu Dhabi Breakwater, the **Abu Dhabi Heritage Village** offers a fascinating insight into Abu Dhabi's Bedouin cultural heritage. Pottery and exotic spices make for nice keepsakes. Later, visit the vast **Marina Mall** or **Abu Dhabi Mall**, the latter of which has over 200 stores, 40 food outlets and a six-screen cinema.

SAVOUR... Spas are found in the best hotels. Try the **Emirates Palace** for regal pampering. One of the most unique wellness centres in the emirate, exclusively designed for women, is the **Abu Dhabi Ladies Club**. Nestled in lush gardens, it has numerous international sports facilities, a pool and treatment rooms.

Do, dare

DO... Golf is a year-round pastime. Abu Dhabi International Airport has its own **Al Ghazal Golf Club** (ideal if you need to fill time while in transit), and there are many courses outside the



city centre. The city is also home to the Abu Dhabi Golf Championship, hosted at the **Abu Dhabi Golf Club**. The **Palm Sports Resort** also offers golf, along with rugby, tennis, swimming, gym and equestrian facilities. For the latter, the ultimate venue is the **Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club (ADEC)** at the Mushrif. Visitors can enjoy ADEC's world-class equestrian facilities, along with tennis courts, swimming pools and a golf course. Cricket and football are also popular sports, the latter so much so that the FIFA Club World Cup UAE 2009 takes place in the city this December.

DARE... Embark on an overnight desert safari, where dune bashing is a must for those who have never experienced the fun of off-road driving. Or try your hand at sand skiing on the largest dunes in the world at the **Liwa Oasis**. **Yas Island**, meanwhile, is the region's new prime sports and leisure centre. It is home to a Ferrari Theme Park, a Formula One circuit, a water park, golf courses, polo fields and hotels. The **Yas Marina Circuit** was recently in the spotlight as it was the venue for the 2009 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. ■

IN THE EVENT...

TIME YOUR TRIP TO COINCIDE WITH THESE HIGHLIGHTS
DECEMBER 2009

9-19th

FIFA Club World Cup UAE 2009

Held at the Mohammed Bin Zayed Stadium near the city centre.

JANUARY 2010

21-23rd

The Abu Dhabi Classic 2010

Some of the most prestigious cars in the history of motorsport race at Yas Marina Circuit.

21-24th

Abu Dhabi Golf Championship

A star-studded event, fully sanctioned by the PGA European Tour.

FEBRUARY 2010

25-27th

Abu Dhabi Yacht Show

This superyacht brokerage show is on course to achieve a top three industry ranking.

This page, clockwise from top left: Yas Marina; Qasr Al Sarab; the Sun Tower at Yas Marina Circuit; Yas Marina Circuit



DEEP IMPACT

scuba diving

Plunging to ancient wrecks, wallowing with giant turtles and drifting alongside rare whale sharks... the world's great dive sites take you to new depths of discovery

By Joe Marsden



GRAND CAYMAN, CARIBBEAN

For many, the Cayman Islands rank top among the Caribbean's dive spots – and there are more than 200 sites to choose from. The warm waters attract tropical fish, colourful sponges and hard corals, and visibility is good. Stingray City can be dived or snorkelled as it has shallow waters – perfect for floating alongside giant stingrays. The Snapper Hole is a fantastic shallow dive in the right weather, Northwest Point Drop-Off has black triggerfish and clouds of blue chromis, and Eagle Ray Pass on the North Wall has coral archways and crevices that are home to sponges, fans and spotted eagle rays. Cayman wrecks include the Ten Sails (from 1794) and the four-masted schooner Cali (in 1957), both in the East End of Grand Cayman.

TOP TIP Dive the West Wall for its snappers, angelfish and wonderful photo opportunities



SS YONGALA, GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK, AUSTRALIA

Among this legendary reef's myriad sites, one wreck not to miss is the SS Yongala. This steel and timber steamship sank during a 1911 cyclone outside Townsville, Queensland, drowning all its passengers. Undiscovered for more than half a century, at 110m (361') it is one of the largest, most intact historic shipwrecks and although now protected (meaning you can't dive inside) you can still see the rudder, masts, engine, steam rooms, portholes and nameplate. Encrusted with bright soft and hard corals, the wreck is loved by hydroids, sea fans, barracuda, sharks, giant gropers, sea snakes, turtles and rays.

TOP TIP Dive June to September for the possibility of spotting whales

BUCK ISLAND REEF NATIONAL MONUMENT, VIRGIN ISLANDS, CARIBBEAN

Deep in the Virgin Islands, off the northeast coast of Saint Croix, an uninhabited, 60-million-year-old tropical island is surrounded by a coral reef so beautiful it has been a protected area since 1948. Buck Island Reef National Monument's vast reef is home to more than 250 fish species, corals (at Cane Bay), sponges, spotted eagle rays, nurse sharks, lemon sharks, juvenile black-tip reef sharks, white-tip reef sharks, and hawksbill, green and leatherback sea turtles. There are also shipwrecks, such as the Northwind, Rosaomaria, Suffolk Maid and the HMS Rhone off Salt Island (sunk in 1867), along with a wall plunging more than 900 metres (3,000 feet).

TOP TIP Follow the underwater marked trail and read informative plaques about the local marine flora and fauna

ARI ATOLL, MALDIVES, INDIAN OCEAN

More than 40 kilometres (25 miles) long, the Ari Atoll is the second largest in the Maldives and has intriguing submerged pinnacles and channels that are home to manta rays, giant frogfish, turtles, hammerheads (at Hammerhead Point), and grey reef sharks, fusiliers and batfish (at Fish Head). But it is the rare whale shark – the largest living marine creature – that most divers seek. It is a treat to see these gentle giants in their natural habitat, and the Maldives are unique in the Indian Ocean as they host a year-round population. Thankfully, this endangered species is now protected, and diving here offers a fantastic opportunity to learn more about initiatives to protect them.

TOP TIP Head to Maaya Thila to spot the elusive guitar shark



ELPHINSTONE, RED SEA

Around nine kilometres (six miles) from the shore in the southern Red Sea you'll discover Elphinstone: a 300 metre (1,000-foot) Mecca for divers. The current tends to be strong, making it a magnet for marine life, with visibility around 20 metres (65 feet). Expect to see sharks, including oceanic white tips with their loyal pilot fish darting alongside. You can also spot hammerheads, barracuda, emperor and zebra angelfish, snappers, soft corals, giant morays, grouper and Suez fusiliers. The east side of Elphinstone has a great drop-off covered with a rainbow of corals, and the west, less steep, has caves and overhangs, eels, and sometimes turtles. ■

TOP TIP To maximise sunlight on the reef, take morning dives on the east side and afternoon dives on the west







british virgin islands

Best of British

A fragmented jigsaw of green isles in a turquoise sea, the Caribbean's British Virgin Islands are a haven for sailors. This ten-day cruise steers you to some of the finest ports and anchorages

By Miriam Cain

Thanks to their balmy climate, steady easterly trade winds and an abundance of sheltered anchorages, the British Virgin Islands (BVIs) were made for the waterborne. Forming part of an archipelago with the US Virgin Islands some 130 kilometres (80 miles) east of Puerto Rico, the BVIs comprise around 50 islands and islets nestled together and exuding a low-key ambiance. Their neighbouring US Virgin Islands (USVI) have a subtly different character; they are known for their bustling activity and are the shopping Mecca of the Caribbean.

A typical charter through the BVI archipelago takes in Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Cooper Island, Jost Van Dyke, Marina Cay and other smaller islands and islets; many uninhabited and largely unspoilt. Except for Anegada, which is a low-lying coral atoll, each island is similar in character: hilly, covered in scrub, surrounded by coral reefs to some extent, and fringed by white sandy beaches. Distances between the islands are short, and the islands are therefore ideal for first-time charterers wishing to test the waters.

The most popular cruising area around the BVIs is the channel named after Sir Francis Drake, who sailed through it in the 16th century on his way to fight the Spanish in Santo Domingo. Running from St John (on the US Virgin Islands side) to the BVIs' North Sound in Virgin Gorda, the scenic →

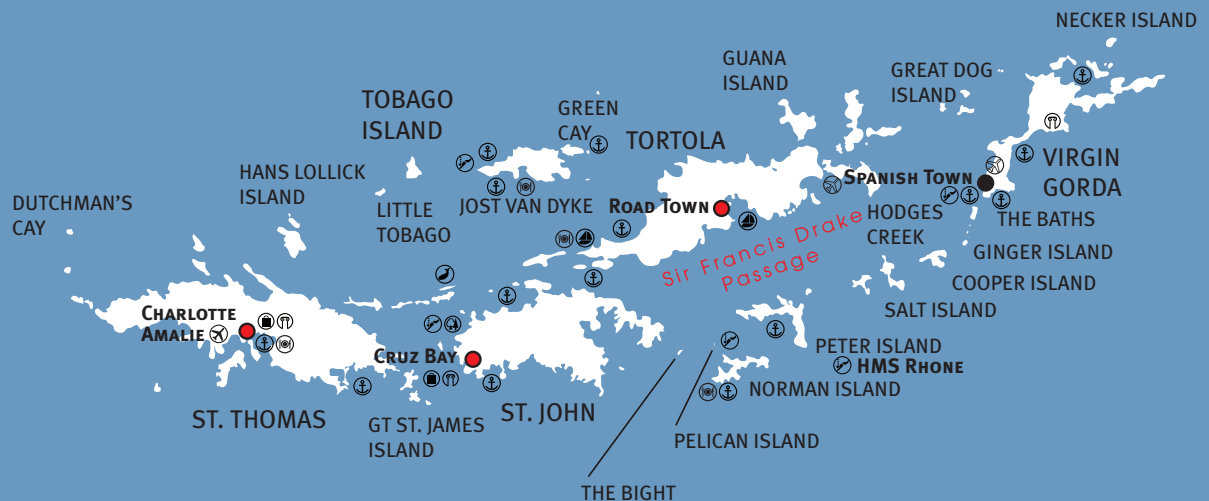
Right: the BVI archipelago is made up of around 50 islands and islets, all fringed by white sandy beaches
Opposite page, clockwise from top: beach bars can be found on many of the habited islands; the uninhabited islands are perfect for a peaceful afternoon's anchorage; the BVIs have a plethora of dive sites



ITINERARY

- DAY 1** Tortola (or St John if boarding in the USVI)
- DAY 2** Tortola – Peter Island (9nm)
- DAY 3** Peter Island – Norman Island (3nm)
- DAY 4** Norman Island – Salt Island (5nm)
- DAY 5** Salt Island – Ginger Island (3nm)

- DAY 6** Ginger Island – The Baths, Virgin Gorda (3nm)
- DAY 7** The Baths and North Sounds, Virgin Gorda (5nm)
- DAY 8** Virgin Gorda – Guana Island (9nm)
- DAY 9** Guana Island – Jost Van Dyke (6nm)
- DAY 10** Jost Van Dyke – Tortola / St John (4nm/13nm)





YOUR PERSONAL GUIDES

From planning the best itinerary and finding the most suitable yacht for your party, to restaurant recommendations, CNI's charter experts have first-hand knowledge of all the yachts and cruising destinations in the British Virgin Islands. Here, two CNI charter brokers, a yacht owner and a CNI captain offer their personal recommendations.



Pierre Hurel, CNI Monaco

"The British Virgin Islands are perfect for fun, family charters and Virgin Gorda, in particular, is a lure for many of my charter clients. One thing every

charterer should do is explore The Baths on the southwest coast, either by swimming, snorkelling or sea kayaking. For those wishing to head inland, the Spanish fortress ruins at Little Fort National Park are worth a visit, as is the old Copper Mine. Or hike The Baths' trails and spot pelicans on the beach and turtles bathing in the shallow waters. For a taste of Creole cuisine, Chez Bamboo in Spanish Town serves up spicy Cajun dishes."

Hume Jones, CNI London

"A week's charter in the BVIs is a fantastic way for people to experience the Caribbean for the first time. The waters are calm and the distances between the islands are minimal. Many of my charter clients return from the BVIs and rave about the open-air restaurant of the Biras Creek Hotel, which overlooks North Sound on Virgin



Gorda. Following my own sojourn to the BVIs, I would thoroughly recommend stepping ashore at the Bitter End Yacht Club, which has a wide range of facilities, dinghies for hire and various restaurants."



**Paloma, 60.25m (197'8), 12 guests.
Prices from €180,000 per week**



**Amnesia, 60m (196'), 12 guests.
Prices from €250,000 per week**



**Apogee, 62.5m (205'), 12 guests.
Prices from US\$350,000 per week**



**Maraya, 54.2m (177'9), 12 guests.
Prices from €300,000 per week**



channel remains much as it was in the days of the legendary sailor – surrounded by mountainous islands swathed in forests.

Novel encounters

The ideal place to start your charter is Tortola. If you're travelling from the US, you can join your yacht from St Thomas Airport in the US Virgin Islands and sail the short distance to the BVIs. If you're coming from Europe, you can fly to Antigua and get a quick connecting flight to Tortola and then board your yacht in the port at Road Town, the island's capital.

With a thickly forested mountainous spine along its centre, and a coastline studded with golden bays, Tortola is the largest island in the BVI chain. From here, spend languid days sailing between the islands, landing the tender on deserted beaches and discovering private sanctuaries and luxurious island resorts.

Following a few hours bathing around Tortola's Cane Garden Bay, cruise across the channel to Great Harbour on Peter Island, before stepping ashore to take scenic walks to private beaches. You can indulge in a Cast Away Facial at the Peter Island Resort, swim in Dead Man's Bay, or take the tender across to Dead Chest Island. Reputedly the origin of the sea shanty "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest – yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum," the island is said to have earned its name after the infamous pirate Blackbeard left several of his crew there

with nothing except a bottle of rum as punishment. Some tried to swim across to Peter Island but didn't make it, hence the bay on Peter Island, opposite Dead Chest, is named Dead Man's Bay. The author Robert Louis Stevenson then read the tale, and the sea shanty appeared in his novel *Treasure Island*. Reputed to be the site of buried treasure from the Spanish galleon *Nuestra Senora*, nearby Norman Island is said to be the inspiration for Stevenson's novel and is the perfect anchorage for an afternoon of water sports. For children, a treasure hunt ashore can be organised by the crew. After the day's activities, step aboard the notorious Willy T schooner (anchored just off the island) for dinner and dancing – you might even end up walking the plank!

In the wake of legends

From Norman Island, cruise to Salt Island and dive the wreck of HMS Rhone. This Roal Mail steamer, which went down in 1867, is one of the premier dive sites in the Caribbean. Other spectacular dive sites in the area include the Chikuzen off Tortola. This 82m (270') steel-hulled ship sank off the island's east end and is now home to an array of tropical fish, including yellowtail, barracuda, black-tip sharks and drum fish. Meanwhile, the brilliant coral wall known as Alice in Wonderland at nearby Ginger Island slopes from 12 metres (40 feet) to a sandy bottom at 30 metres (98 feet). Aptly →

Opposite page: Cane Garden Bay on Tortola is one of the island's best beaches; the BVIs are a yachtsman's paradise

This page, clockwise from left: swimming and snorkelling the shallow waters of Virgin Gorda is a must; Tortola is the largest island in the BVIs, yet still remains unspoilt; distances between the islands are short, enabling you to hop from one island to the next



This page, clockwise from below: the islands have an idyllic low key vibe; one of the BVIs' local residents; Foxy's on Jost Van Dyke serves up the island's speciality Painkiller cocktail

Opposite page: most of the islands are hilly and covered in scrub; The Baths on Virgin Gorda are a natural formation of colossal boulder-formed pools that are perfect for snorkelling

named, the site is often referred to as a fantasy due to its overhangs, vibrant colours, huge mushroom-shaped corals and plethora of colourful sea creatures, ranging from conch to butterfly fish.

After your fill of diving, cruise through Sir Francis Drake Channel to The Baths of Virgin Gorda. Reclining to the east of the island chain, Virgin Gorda is the third largest in the group, and The Baths, located on the southwest coast, are a natural formation of colossal boulder-formed pools, caves and grottoes created by volcanoes. Kayak around the dramatic boulders or take one of The Bath's trails to Devil's Bay Beach to snorkel in seawater pools teeming with colourful fish and coral. Cap the day with sunset cocktails at the aptly named Top Of The Baths restaurant.

Island inspiration

Just a short cruise away you can anchor off the reef and swim around Little Dix Bay, or step ashore and head to the spa at the resort of the same name. Around the headland of Blowing Point, Savannah Bay beach is a beautiful arc of secluded sand – the perfect spot for your crew to prepare you a picnic on the beach. Spend the night anchored in the huge expanse of sheltered waters in the North Sound, which is enclosed by reefs and mini islands (including Mosquito, Prickly Pear and Necker Island). Activities abound, from snorkelling the reefs off St Eustacia to

water-skiing to testing your skills in small-boat sailing at the Bitter End Yacht Club. Having recently been through an extensive refurbishment, the resort maintains its seafaring tradition, but has managed to sneak in a spot of glamour, too. Only accessible by boat, it has two restaurants and bars, an English-style pub, boutiques and spa facilities. Rendezvous with fellow seafarers at the clubhouse for fresh fish, lobster, steak and West Indian cuisine.

Nearby Guana Island is also an interesting spot to visit as it is a wildlife sanctuary with some of the richest collections of plants and animal species to be found in the Caribbean. Anchor off White Bay Beach and take the tender to this stretch of white powder sand for a picnic lunch ashore. From here, you can walk to six further secluded beaches, or hike the island's scenic nature trails.

The sandy island of Jost Van Dyke is the last stop on your itinerary. One of the liveliest islands after Tortola, there are several restaurants and bars in Great Harbour and White Bay. Swim to the Soggy Dollar Bar, sway to reggae tunes and tuck into a feast of lobster at Ivan's Stress Free Bar, then celebrate your final evening with a Painkiller at the infamous Foxy's. The island's trademark cocktail is made from rum, orange juice, pineapple and cream of coconut – the perfect toast to an excellent cruise. ■

For further information on chartering in the BVIs, contact your nearest CNI charter broker, see page 6 for details.





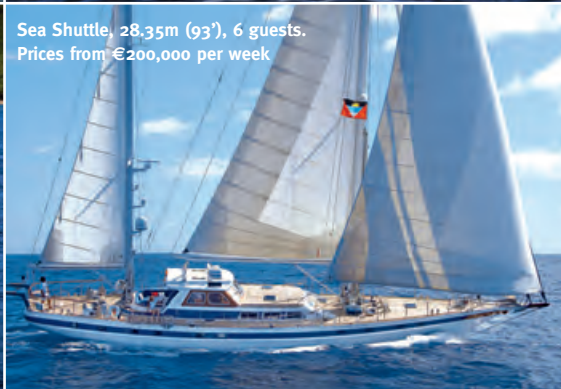
Helios, 45.2m (148'7"), 10 guests.
Prices from US\$150,000 per week



Savannah, 36m (118'), 8 guests.
Prices from US\$49,500 per week



Symphony II, 34.1m (111'), 8 guests.
Prices from US\$49,500 per week



Sea Shuttle, 28.35m (93'), 6 guests.
Prices from €200,000 per week

YOUR PERSONAL GUIDES

Graham de Zille, yacht owner

Yacht owner, yacht-racing enthusiast and avid charterer, Graham de Zille has made an art form of entertaining guests on board. One of his favourite areas is the British Virgin Islands. "It is an ideal charter ground as sailing between anchorages is never more than a few hours," he explains.

"This is reassuring if you are entertaining first-time charterers, or guests who are less confident sailors." But the BVIs also score highly in many other ways. "Superyacht charter is all about inspiration, relaxation and variety," says de Zille. "These islands have the best of everything. One day you can wander around centuries-old ruins such as Fort George on Tortola, on another you can dive in fantastic bays and reefs, such as White Bay off Jost Van Dyke, the Norman Island caves or the wreck of RMS Rhone off Salt Island. Then you can have fun ashore. You can hike up to Virgin Gorda Peak, take lunch at a fabulous hotel, spot sea turtles feeding on Peter Island... the options are endless. Add in the sunshine, stunning waters, friendly locals and fantastic scenery and you can count on pleasing everyone."

Captain Marcel Dekker, Symphony II

Having cruised around the BVIs for many years, Captain Marcel Dekker knows the islands well. "On Virgin Gorda I would recommend lunch at Savannah Bay, a favourite setting for the crew who will set up a picnic on the beach. Spend an afternoon on this stunning sweep of sand followed by cocktails at the Bitter End Yacht Club or dinner ashore at the Biras Creek Resort and a party at Saba Rock's calypso bar." Dekker also suggests snorkelling off Guana Island's Monkey Point, and swimming among the tarpon, sea turtles and numerous reef fish.





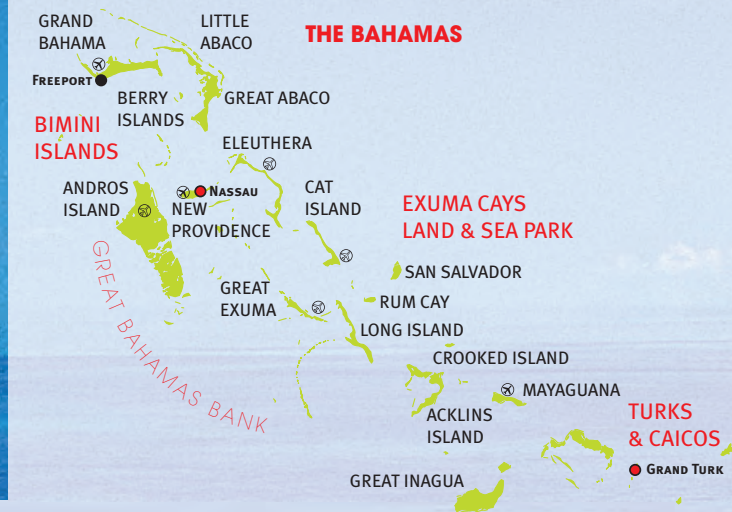
Bahama cruising grounds split

Clustered in distinct groups, with a few drifting loners, the islands of the Bahamas are perfect for chartering — you just need to know which to include on your itinerary

By Suzette McLaughlin

The art of chartering is one that it pays to master — particularly when it comes to somewhere like the Bahamas, which throws some 700 islands and uninhabited cays into the mix. Where to start, quite literally, can be baffling. Just how far do you go (again, quite literally) to ensure you get the best of the islands? Fortunately, both nature and the practicalities of cruising help to narrow your choice, leaving you with the cream of the Abacos and Exumas, and a few more remote islands for those with the desire, and time, to prolong their cruise.

Most Bahamian charters tend to begin and end in Nassau, whisking you through the Exumas and often being extended a few days to encompass Harbour Island and Eleuthera, and possibly the Berry Islands. As sea conditions are unpredictable in the Gulf, it is advisable to let your yacht travel ahead and for you to meet it in the Bahamas. Daily flights to Nassau make this easy. You can fly direct from many US cities, Miami, Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach international airports, as well as from many international destinations. Travelling to your yacht is then a quick sprint on a local plane, seaplane or private air charter. →



THE EXUMAS

The most popular charter area in the Bahamas is the Exumas – but that shouldn't conjure up images of crowded cruising grounds. With the entire Exumas chain extending around 100 nautical miles and comprising 365 islands, there's plenty of potential for privacy. The islands are easily accessible from Nassau, or you can fly direct to Staniel Cay (which has its own airstrip), and meet your yacht mid Exumas. Anchorages are anything from an hour to seven hours apart, so how many of the islands you visit really depends on the length of your cruise, the speed of your yacht, and your desire to see it all or take it easy.

TOP SPOTS

THUNDERBALL CAVE is famed for its appearance in the films *Splash*, and James Bond's *Thunderball*. You'll find it near Staniel Cay, and it's a great place to go snorkelling with stingrays.

STANIEL CAY YACHT CLUB has more than 50 years' tradition of fishing tales, sailors' yarns, conch fritters, rum punch and great waterside views.

PIG BEACH on Big Major Spot Island is an extraordinary place to swim with pigs and watch them sunning themselves on the sand.

SAMPSON CAY CLUB has dining, drinking and shopping galore, along with water and beach activities and a sheltered hurricane-hole marina.

RACHEL'S BUBBLE BATH is a deep, crystal-clear lagoon on northwest Compass Cay; it's one of the finest swimming holes in the Caribbean.

At mid to high tide, ocean waves splash into the serene pool creating a white foam: nature's huge Jacuzzi.

ROCKY DUNDAS GROTTOS off Fowl Cay is a top snorkelling spot. Swim into the small cave to gaze at stalagmites and stalactites.

JOHNNY DEPP ISLAND aka Little Hall's Pond Cay was bought by *The Pirates Of The Caribbean* actor a few years ago. Spot it as you cruise through the Exuma Land and Sea Park.

WARDERICK WELLS CAY is among the cluster of islands that make up the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park, which is a conservation area for marine life.

SUNKEN DRUG PLANE, off Norman's Cay, is a DC-3 airplane that was used for drug smuggling in the 1980s, when it was shot down and sunk. Today it makes for an excellent dive site.

MACDUFFS AT NORMAN'S CAY BEACH CLUB is the perfect spot for a curry conch chowder, sunset watching and cocktails.



THE OUTER ISLANDS

HARBOUR ISLAND, ELEUTHERA AND THE BERRY ISLANDS

The Berry Islands can be incorporated as part of an extended Abacos cruise from Nassau, while Harbour Island and Eleuthera can be included on an Exumas itinerary.

Eleuthera is 177 kilometres (110 miles) long and great for snorkelling, with diving being particularly good at the Current Cut channel, the Blue Hole (an inland saltwater lake), and the Train Wreck (an underwater relic dating back to 1865). Harbour Island, just east of Eleuthera, is a tiny island famous for pink beaches that stretch along most of its length.

CAT ISLAND — being more than 200 kilometres (130 miles) southeast of Nassau, Cat Island is not generally included on charter itineraries.

LONG ISLAND — positioned southeast of the tip of the Exumas, and more than 400 kilometres (250 miles) from Nassau, Long Island is only on select charter itineraries.

TURKS & CAICOS charters here are possible but infrequent, as it's not always easy getting a yacht to this area.



TOP SPOTS

GREEN TURTLE CLUB, Mike's Sundowners Bar (both on Green Turtle Cay), and the Spinnaker Restaurant & Lounge on Treasure Cay are great places to dine.

NIPPERS BEACH BAR & GRILL has impressive food and views. It's perched on a dune on Great Guana Cay overlooking the Great Abaco Barrier Reef.

TREASURE CAY GOLF COURSE is an 18-hole Dick Wilson-designed course on Treasure Cay. It is of championship calibre and known for its tropical beauty.

MARSH HARBOR (the main town of the Abacos) is on Great Abaco, and as such is well worth a visit.

LITTLE HARBOR ARTISTS' COLONY was established by the Johnston family, and the Pete Johnston's Foundry now casts magnificent bronze sculptures that you can view and purchase.

THE CANDY STRIPED LIGHTHOUSE – more formally known as the Hope Town lighthouse – dates back to 1863 and is the most famous landmark in the Abacos.

GREAT GUANA CAY is the spot to bone, reef or deep-sea fish. No Name Cay (the first cay south of Green Turtle), meanwhile, is great for catching the increasingly scarce Bahamian lobster.

DIVE IN AT FOWL CAY MARINE RESERVE and Sandy Cay, which arguably has the largest display of elkhorn coral in the world.

THE ABACOS

A chain of islands extending some 193 kilometres (120 miles) – and distanced from the Exumas by about 297 kilometres (185 nautical miles) north – the Abacos are another prime charter destination, increasingly coming into their own despite their shallow cruising waters, which restrict yachts with deeper drafts. You can begin a charter at Nassau and cruise around six hours to get to the Abacos, or start from Marsh Harbour on Great Abaco, Treasure Cay or Harbour Island.

One development that is changing the face of the Abacos is Baker's Bay. This fantastic new resort complex comprises a nature preserve, a marina with deep-water access for larger yachts, a village, spa, fitness centre, 18-hole golf course (currently under development) and world-class dining. While in the Abacos, take advantage of great game fishing for marlin, sailfish, mahi mahi, wahoo, tuna and shark, plus spear fishing for lobster. ■

Pure hurricane run paradise

A charter on board Hurricane Run
is the perfect chance to catch up,
dive in and zone out

Photography Ed Holt

Space to dream...

Horizon-gaze from the foredeck...

Tan on the sun deck...

Plunge from the diving platform...



lifeafloat







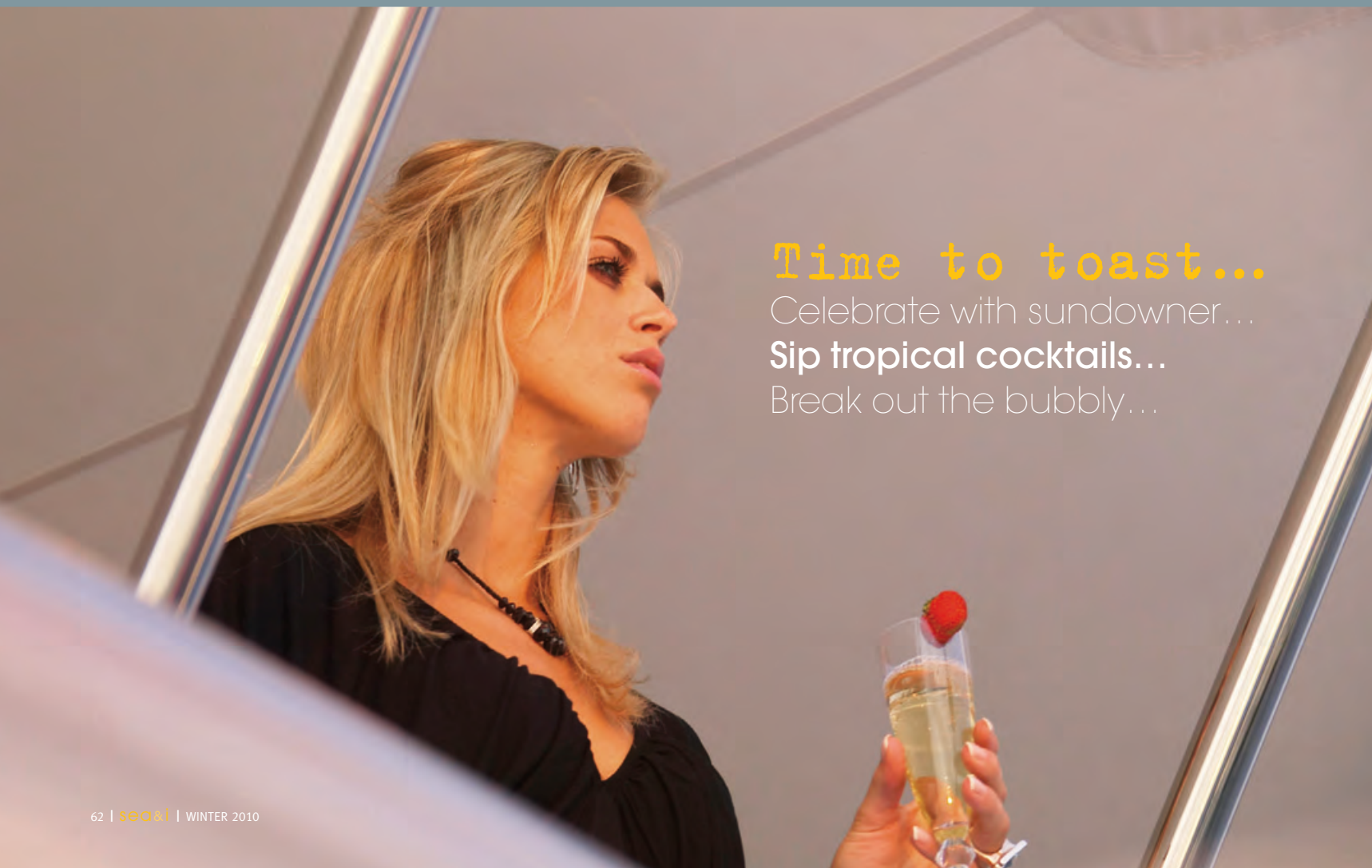
Days to laze...

Soak, lounge and laugh...

Escape to the sun pads...

Snooze in seclusion...





Time to toast...

Celebrate with sundowner...

Sip tropical cocktails...

Break out the bubbly...







richard branson

VIRGIN TERRITORIES

He famously crossed the Atlantic and Pacific in a hot-air balloon, but with his latest venture entrepreneur **Sir Richard Branson** is getting closer to the ocean with the launch of his new catamaran Necker Belle

By Kate Rigby

Having been in the international travel market for 25 years, Sir Richard Branson of Virgin fame continues to take a hands-on role in the choice of properties he offers clients. His exclusive Virgin Limited Edition portfolio currently extends from his original Necker Island retreat in the British Virgin Islands, to Kasbah Tamadot in Morocco, Ulusaba in South Africa, The Lodge in Verbier, Switzerland, Sa Terra Rotja near Palma, Mallorca, and (for dining and events) The Roof Gardens in London, UK.

Perhaps with the intention of providing his original Caribbean property with a little sister, Branson recently purchased and refitted a 32m (105') catamaran, Necker Belle, which is available to charter from February 2010. Here, the British entrepreneur talks about his ventures – including his new launch.

Travel experts tend to specialise in one type of holiday – what is your inspiration behind offering seven very distinct/individual properties?

I think it all ties in with the way I approach any of my businesses. Distinction, soul and character are three very important qualities that define our retreats. We have been fortunate in finding hidden gems, with each having a fun story behind the inspiration. Take Kasbah Tamadot, for instance... I have my mum to thank for spotting this divine fortress from the side of the road while I was attempting a world record in a hot-air balloon. Necker Island... well, that was a ploy to win over Joan, now my loving wife. We aspire to inspire our guests and strive to keep our collection eclectic and a tempting alternative to cookie-cutter hotels. Necker Belle is a fine example of how we do not confine ourselves to land. →

Clockwise from top: Necker Island; Kasbah Tamadot in Morocco; the recently refitted charter yacht Necker Belle



Above: Necker Belle's saloon converts into a double cabin with a privacy screen
Opposite page, from top: Ulusaba in South Africa; cabin luxury on board Necker Belle; Sa Terra Rotja in Mallorca; The Lodge, Verbier

Each of your properties seem to be very personal to you – places where you love to spend time. Do you tend to buy with your own taste in mind, or for your future customers?

The founding property in the Virgin Limited Edition collection was Necker Island, my very own home, so yes, my taste has consequently come into play. Each retreat is very personal to me and my family. However, many factors enter the picture; the location of the property is very important, as is being able to successfully blend local and indigenous style/culture with luxury and comfort. Our aim is to provide amazing experiences for our guests. Hopefully the allure of the land, locals and the native culture mixed with a bit of my taste will continue to drive our guests to our retreats.

As far as Necker Belle was concerned, I first encountered her as her former self, Lady Barbaretta, when I spent a week chartering her in 2005. I fell in love and so began a three-year complete rebuild and refit. She's now the latest addition to our collection. Free to explore all ends of the globe, she has a unique quality to adapt to wherever she sails.

What things are important when you choose a new property?

We attract guests who value excellent service and tailored experiences; therefore, when we're choosing a property we need to be sure that the location is just right and that we are bringing forth an experience that is unique to the marketplace.

What would be your ultimate property/travel experience to offer clients?

We're always looking to expand the collection where we can, whether it be a new property or a management contract. We hope to expand our international brand presence and are actively pursuing leads. Ideally, we'd like our collection to include retreats in Europe, South America, and perhaps explore more Caribbean and African ventures. We don't operate with any restriction as we believe we have sufficient brand identity and experience to operate globally.

What inspired Necker Belle? Have you previously owned or chartered yachts?

Perhaps I wanted Necker Island to have a floating sister! Seriously, I was brought up in the countryside and absolutely love being in touch with nature. I lived and worked on a house boat for many years in my twenties, and although I've owned boats before they've never been anything on this scale, and I've certainly not chartered any yachts as a business before. I think it's so wonderful to be able to explore the beautiful, undamaged parts of the world and to enjoy the magnificent oceans.

Tell us about Necker Belle and her charter plans.

Necker Belle is an indoor/outdoor sailing yacht with spacious common areas and four beautifully appointed main cabins, all with en suites, so she's perfectly designed for fun and relaxation. She can accommodate up to 12 guests by converting the saloon into a double cabin with a privacy screen, and two lucky adventurous souls can sleep under the stars. The portside deck is set up for game fishing and enthusiasts will be fighting for the game chair. Water babies will be able to dive off the yacht from the 1.8m (6') diving board on the top of the aft deck straight into the clear turquoise waters. I'm really excited about one gadget in particular – a three-man submarine that can be used by people who don't have their scuba licence.

Where in the Caribbean will she charter? Can clients combine a charter with a stay at Necker Island?

There are no planned routes; all will be tailor-made to each request. And yes, guests can combine a charter with a stay on Necker Island. We plan to operate on a weekly charter basis, however, should the yacht be available for days in between, we will invite guests from Necker Island to consider her for day charters or drink/dinner receptions when at anchor.

Normally Necker Island is hired for exclusive use by an individual or group, but during Celebration Weeks, held on selected weeks throughout the year, couples or singles can

book one of 14 rooms individually and share the island with others. We have a family fun week which will be held on the 23 October 2010 for three, four or seven nights, which would be ideal for those who want to combine the two.

Today's superyachts are compared to the finest six-star hotels; the charter market is thus extremely competitive. How do you anticipate making an impact and creating a unique experience in such a market?

Necker Belle is not your average catamaran. In fact, she is one of the largest all-carbon multi-hull yachts of her kind, reaching speeds of over 20 knots. In addition to her speed, the interior is luxuriously spacious — 14m (46') wide — so you feel like you're in your own private beach house. And her indoor areas are light and airy and offer undisturbed views as she cruises. I think her little submersible gadget will also make an impact, particularly with the boys – it could be described as being a bit like an underwater fighter plane.

What things about the luxury yacht charter market do you think need to change/improve/adapt?

As we are new to the scene, I don't feel it is right for us to start making pointers. Instead, we look forward to bringing our wealth of luxury travel experience to this industry. We will let you know how we go!

How will you optimise the Virgin brand's innovation and business ethic in the superyacht charter market?

Just as we do with our other retreats, we will continue to make our guests the number one priority and strive to offer an experience that is unique to the marketplace, bringing the small but all-important extra touches to the forefront. Necker Belle will partake in setting goals with our charitable foundation, Virgin Unite, just like the other retreats. As I said, she's a fast cat with a soon-to-be submersible in the mix... I think it says it all! ■

Necker Belle is based in the Caribbean during the winter and will be available for weekly charters. It is planned she will spend the summer in the Mediterranean.



NECKER BELLE	
LENGTH.....	32m (105')
BEAM.....	14m (45')
BUILDER.....	CMN Cherbourg
YEAR.....	2003/2009
STATEROOMS	4
GUESTS.....	12
CREW.....	7



PROPERTY FOCUS

If you are looking to buy, rent or invest worldwide, tune your property radar to Paris, the Seychelles and Malibu

PARISIAN PIED A TERRE

Located in the chic 16th arrondissement on Place du Trocadéro and facing the Eiffel Tower, La Réserve Paris comprises ten spacious apartments. Akin to the best penthouse at the most exclusive hotel, the one to four-bedroom apartments represent the latest concept in luxury accommodation, providing privacy, five-star service and stunning design by Remi Tessier — one of France's most talked-about interior designers. Tessier has been responsible for the interior of several yachts, including the 54m (177') Parsifal III.

All of the apartments at La Réserve boast state-of-the-art technology, a private terrace or balcony, stylish living areas and superbly equipped kitchens should you choose not to use the butler service. You also have access to an on-site concierge who is the perfect city guide. Having worked for two of the premier hotels in Paris, she can offer you all the inside advice on where to go and what to see in this compelling city.

For details visit www.lareserve-paris.com



FOUR SEASONS SEYCHELLES

If you're looking to buy into paradise, the Four Seasons Private Residences Seychelles offer a triple incentive to invest. The freehold plots for each villa are an acre in size; their location is in a hurricane-free zone overlooking the Indian Ocean and one of the world's finest beaches; and there is no tax on capital gains or inheritance.

Of the 28 villas, just ten remain to be sold at the resort on the west side of Mahé at Petite Anse, and they are due for completion in late 2010. Award-winning architecture sees various living levels with terraces overlooking the ocean and jungle, large verandas, infinity pools, private accommodations, Bose home entertainment systems and unique features.

The villas are adjacent to the Four Seasons Resort Seychelles, and villa owners have full use of the resort's excellent facilities – including a gymnasium, helipad and restaurants. Villas start from US\$7 million.

For details visit www.seychellesresidences.com

MALIBU BEACH

Malibu's most exclusive beaches have two new seafront houses for rent. Located on the grassy bluff of Zuma Beach, the Palm Pavilion is a modern interpretation of a classic Californian beach bungalow, with three double bedrooms and four bathrooms – every room having ocean views for watching dolphins, sunsets and surfers. There is a media room, bar and garden pool, along with a concierge service and the option of a private chef, childcare and chauffeur service.

Alternatively, you can opt for the Malibu Beach House, which sits on a dramatic bluff overlooking the pristine El Matador beach, with Pacific views, rose gardens, sweeping lawns and privacy-ensuring palm trees. There are five en-suite double bedrooms and one twin, a wraparound veranda, and a private pool, gymnasium, hot tub and sauna in the grounds. The master bedroom also has a four-poster bed, fireplace, Jacuzzi and private veranda.

For details visit www.sjvillas.co.uk

audiovisual

THE BIG FIVE

Technology marches at an alarming rate and, being one of the few systems that the yacht owner has a hands-on relationship with, entertainment equipment is very much in the firing line when it comes to talking about the latest and greatest. **Paul Rose** from Icon Connect looks at some of the leading options available, and offers advice on the best strategy to avoid getting burnt by future advances



Above: screen entertainment goes alfresco on board Xanadu

AUDIO

The biggest advance in audio has been the emergence of the personal music player, or iPod. While we are not here to promote the products of any one manufacturer, it is a fact that this little device has revolutionised the way people collect, store, access and listen to music. With the early iPods, limited storage capacity dictated that the music files required compression (MP3) to store an acceptable number of songs, and this resulted in a significant reduction in quality. But today, with drives up to 160 gigabytes (GB), minimal data is lost during compression and thus the iPod is now the de facto jukebox system of choice.

iPod docking stations can frequently be found in every cabin of a yacht, but servers can also exist in a centralised area, allowing guests to access a single music library from anywhere on the yacht. This is ideal in a charter environment.

VIDEO

High definition (HD) video may be the single most significant development in audiovisuals in the last ten years, not just because it provides enhanced picture quality, but because it has

driven the transport of video to an all-digital platform and, with it, given the opportunity for content providers to rewrite the rule book on copyright protection. Enter High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) and High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection (HDCP). These innocent acronyms have turned the world of multi-room audio-video distribution upside down. For the yacht owner it's simple: if I can get HD television in my home, I want it on my yacht.

Media-on-demand systems have been with us for a while, but there is still much confusion surrounding this concept. Current systems provide the means to store a DVD library on a central hard-disc drive server, which then gives the entire yacht access to the library. Fortunately, from a legal standpoint this has been accepted as fair use of the material by way of a back-up copy of a legitimately owned DVD.

The emergence of Blu-ray as the disc format of choice for high-definition content brings with it some challenges. Firstly, due to the huge amounts of data stored per Blu-ray disc (up to 50GB) the space required for server storage has increased considerably. Therefore you would need four or five servers →



Above: the cinema room on board Cloud 9

—each holding up to 28 tera bytes —to accommodate a sizeable HD library.

Secondly, although Blu-ray has agreed that it is fair use to make a copy of your disc, this needs to be done under licence using an online authentication process called Managed Copy.

The other sector of media-on-demand that is becoming more popular in the home is the downloading of paid-for content over the internet (iTunes, Vudu, Hulu etc). Larger yachts with broadband VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) capability can use these services to some extent but due to bandwidth limitations, this is currently by no means a complete solution and will most likely co-exist alongside a local media library in the near future.

As far as screens go, the latest generation utilises LEDs as the light source in place of the old CCFLs (Cold Cathode Fluorescent Lamps). This has spawned a series of ultra-thin screens that are noticeably brighter than previous LCDs. The use of Dynamic LED technology has also improved contrast as light can now be delivered more accurately, and dark or black areas are deeper.

The next evolution of these will be the organic light-emitting diodes (OLED) screens, which will enable even greater control over colour and light. Some small OLED screens are emerging

now but it may be some years before we see screens large enough for general entertainment use. While ultra-thin screens are an attractive proposition to the interior designer, all screens need a power supply, circuitry and a connection plate. Therefore, what you gain in millimetres for a wafer-thin screen on the wall, you are likely to pay for in an additional box in the cabinet to house all the above components that used to be built into the screen.

CONTROL

Integrated control systems have been around for a while but they continue to receive bad press. Much of this ill-feeling is misdirected, however, as, simply put, systems the likes of Crestron or AMX are only as good as the professionals specifying, installing and programming them. The secret to turning what is, in essence, a collection of high-quality control devices into a reliable and simple-to-operate control system are: firstly, the selection of integration-friendly hardware, as not all brands speak Crestron or AMX; secondly, the correct specification of processors, as many installers overload a single processor and expect it to control the whole yacht; thirdly, accurate and well-constructed programming, which involves

using a code that has been tried and tested. And lastly, and most importantly, the design of a user interface (GUI) that is simple to use and intuitive.

The control systems mentioned above are not inexpensive and therefore a poor user experience has inevitably driven some clients to look elsewhere. Enter the iPod Touch. The latest generation of iPods sport a touch screen and the same system can be used for touch controls on a yacht, but it's important to appreciate that it is not the iPod doing all the work. You still need a Crestron processor, a well-written code and a WiFi network, among other things. All the iPod does is replace the touch-panel control with a smaller device with less buttons, less screen space and less battery capacity. They can make an attractive and fun addition to a Crestron control system but they will not make it less expensive or more reliable.

DISTRIBUTION

Currently, the only viable solution for distributing HDCP-compliant HD video around a yacht is over fiber-optic cable using the Crestron Digital Media router. This is the Swiss Army knife of routing, and not only enables the distribution of high-bandwidth HDMI sources, but also works with all legacy sources as well (Composite, SVHS, Component).

One small problem built into HDMI is that the soundtrack travels with the video on the same cable that delivers the audio to the screen – not necessarily where you want it for sub-zone amplification. Digital media enables you to separate stereo audio from the source signal before it is sent to the room, allowing you to watch the movie in full blown 7.1 surround in the living room, while also sending the same audio in stereo to the aft deck or other sub-zones.

INSTALLATION

As always, any technical system installed on a yacht is to some degree reliant on the quality of workmanship employed. The tried-and-tested method is to use sliding or rotating equipment racks, individual room UPSs, protected cable looms and automatic thermostatically controlled fans. Designing and delivering a successful and reliable integrated entertainment system relies on a single fundamental principle: that is, to balance the budget across the five areas we have covered here. Failure to do so will leave one or more areas of weakness and the system will inevitably disappoint. ■

Icon Connect provides highly flexible, integrated systems covering all aspects of entertainment and control on board superyachts.

For further information, visit www.iconconnect.com



TUNING INTO THE FUTURE

Three of the technologies discussed in this feature — Blu-Ray, Video on Demand (over the internet) and Digital Media — all have a common denominator, and that is bandwidth. Video and audio content are now being made available at higher resolutions than ever before and this all places a strain on plumbing to the extent that, for most installations, it is time to rip out the old lead piping and install the new digital super highway that is fibre-optic.

Many pundits are extolling the virtues (and future domination) of TCP/IP (Internet Protocol Suite) and the use of a single-data network for the transport of all electronic signals, including AV. While the intrusion of the internet into our daily lives is undeniable, we are some years away from this being ready to manage and deliver the huge amounts of data required for today's high-definition entertainment. In fact, it will be several years before HDCP will be ready for implementation over IP as the specification has not yet even been written.

For now, it is strongly advised that the IT and AV systems be kept separate. There is a distinct difference between high-convenience video (YouTube, internet streaming, VOD (Video on Demand) etc) and high-quality video (Blu-ray, High Definition, Home Theatre) and the lack of HDCP support over IP is a defining factor in separating these two sectors of the audiovisual industry.

More significantly, it doesn't make sense to take a perfectly good high-resolution video source and then compress and encode it, before decompressing and reconverting to video (of lesser quality), just so that it can be distributed over the IT networks, especially when the technology exists to send the signal in uncompressed high-definition straight to the screen.



perini navi

PANTHALASSA

sea&i reveals the winning teamwork behind Perini Navi's latest launch — the 56m (184') Panthalassa

By Miriam Cain



successful. From her build team alone, it was clear this all-aluminium alloy ketch was going to make a significant impact. Her sail plan and hull optimisation are by racing-yacht designer Ron Holland, and her interior by world-famous architects Foster + Partners. Thanks to this triumvirate of yachting expertise, along with project management by CNI broker Mark Hilpern, and considerable input from her owners, Panthalassa is both a unique and elite yacht. Her appearance is more angular and aggressive than her predecessors, and she has an innovatively revised deck arrangement. She also has a more hydrodynamic shape than her sisterships, and she is the first of the 56-metre series to have a flush foredeck (and no 'whale back') and flush windows for a clean, modern profile.

Into new territory

Panthalassa's interior is the work of Foster + Partners' Todd Hutton. Bringing fresh inspiration to the yacht industry, Hutton has created a signature Foster + Partners design that was nevertheless heavily influenced by the owner, who had previously worked with the designers on several land-based projects. The design brief called for a seamless link between the exterior and interior, and Hutton met the challenge by establishing a clean flow of lines to merge key areas, and by drawing plenty of natural daylight into the yacht. The latter is largely achieved thanks to skylights on the upper deck; the effect of which is dramatically enhanced by one particular raised feature skylight that doubles as a table. LED lighting is set within the glass of this skylight, providing dramatic mood lighting throughout the yacht at night. The large windows that run the length of the main saloon and wrap around the wheelhouse also serve to increase the natural light in the interior, while at the yacht's centre a gracefully flowing stairwell is wrapped in a translucent, acrylic enclosure that allows light to flood through. Oversized portholes feature throughout the lower deck to further enhance the 'outside in' concept.

Panthalassa's layout has been extremely well thought through in every regard, and is practical throughout. Flexible, multifunctional spaces offer a host of well-conceived opportunities for social interaction, yet the division of space differs from other yachts in her range. This is particularly evident in the main deck saloon, which is one huge, undivided indoor/outdoor living and dining area that opens, via wide doors, to a fully shaded aft deck lounging and dining area. With clever use of electric glazed screens, the entire main saloon, dining areas and wheelhouse can be divided for formal use, or unified into one large, informal living space. "Everything has been considered, and the intelligent use of space allows for multifunctional areas rather than the traditional sections of main saloon, dining room, library and office," explains →

When it came to designing Panthalassa, her owners knew exactly what they wanted to create: the ultimate, seaworthy sailing machine. With such a clear focus in mind, it paved the way for a simple choice of name, they simply had to decide what language to opt for; they chose Greek. 'Panthalassa' means 'all sea', and this eye-catching ketch has already proved she is perfectly suited for ocean life – with regard to both performance and lifestyle.

Panthalassa is the 48th build from the Perini Navi yard and the eighth 56-metre yacht from a series that has proved highly



SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH	56m (184')
BEAM	11.5m (38')
DRAFT (KEEL UP/DOWN).....	3.95m (13') / 9.73m (32')
ENGINES	2 x Caterpillar C32 V12
SPEED.....	15 knots max
BUILDER.....	Perini Navi
DESIGNER.....	Ron Holland
INTERIOR DESIGN	Foster + Partners
YEAR	2010
STATEROOMS.....	6
GUESTS	12
CREW	10



Hilpern. “Instead we have created a multitude of areas within one space, without losing secluded areas to preserve the privacy of guests.”

Deck spec

Furnishings are similarly innovative, often serving a dual role. Semicircular and S-shaped sofas occupy the main saloon and the covered main deck aft, where they are ideally located for relaxed after-dinner conversation. This clever design allows for guests either to face inwards for socialising or out to sea; at the same time it preserves the flowing lines theme and permits numerous seating areas. In the main saloon, the sofas are positioned to create various conversation areas, while the angle of the corner sofa creates a subtly private library area with uninterrupted views of the ocean. Further unique designs include the aft deck dining table, which becomes a coffee/breakfast area; the boardroom, which can be transformed into a dining area; and the sweeping sofa in the saloon, which flows into a self-supporting cantilevered teak bar, complete with a back-lit onyx bar surface.

A colour palette of warm off-white and natural organic tones harmoniously blends the interior spaces, and is enhanced with natural materials (teak flooring, leather wall panels and granite surfaces) to lend the yacht a tactile, warm feel, akin to the style of a cosy beach house.

Life on board is very much focused on spending a great deal of time outside, and as such the yacht has a multitude of exterior deck spaces. Along with the covered lounging area on the aft deck, there is a large dining table for 12 guests with a sheltered partition and a huge beach area with sun loungers. From here, wide stairs ensure easy access to the swim platform, which features a fold-out barbecue. The main deck stairs lead to the upper deck, where there are further sun pads, comfortable seating areas and an informal dining area.

The upper deck easily fulfils the owners’ requirement for an uncluttered design. Two curved seating areas and sun pads surround the skylight/table, while forward two further seating areas alongside the deck skylights can be partially shaded for respite from the midday sun. From every vantage point of the upper deck, panoramic views abound.

Suite success

Panthalassa is the only Perini of her size to offer six equally proportioned double cabins, all on the lower deck, two of which convert to twin cabins, with four Pullman berths. Light penetrates through oversized portholes, and the effect is amplified by pale leather-panelled walls. The wooden floors are covered in silk rugs, and the furnishings are contemporary with leather detailing. Curved lines unify the dressing table cum

seating areas, and black and gold marble runs through all the en suite bathrooms – again, all are of equal proportion and fitted with showers rather than bathtubs. The crew quarters comprise a spacious mess, two double cabins, two twin-bunked cabins and one triple.

While every care has been taken with the interior, technical specifications were also a high priority on board. As such, the wheelhouse is equipped with the latest, state-of-the-art navigation and communications systems. “Along with video conferencing facilities, she has a Kaleidescape entertainment system throughout,” explains build-captain Greg Butler Davis, who was involved in specifying all the systems on board. “She is also equipped with the latest medical remote diagnosis technology, supported by 24-hour medical back up,” he continues. “On the leisure side, she carries an impressive array of watertoys, including an expedition RIB, two 6.2m (20’3) custom-built, high-speed tenders, waverunners, sea bobs, kite and windsurfing equipment, water-skis, diving equipment and an inflatable swimming pool.”

For a reasonably heavy displacement cruising yacht, Panthalassa has been designed to offer fantastic performance thanks to her sleek underwater profile, huge sail plan and high-tech sail wardrobe. Her asymmetric spinnaker and mizzen staysail provide an extra boost. Her ketch rig is a more efficient arrangement and will allow for performance and comfort in light and heavy winds. The in-boom furling system, meanwhile, reduces the weight aloft and makes the yacht less prone to uncomfortable rolling. She has a 50-tonne centreboard which can be lifted and stowed inside a further 50-tonne keel box. With the centreboard down, the yacht’s draft extends to 9.73m (32’). For shallow-water cruising it can be reduced to 3.95m (13’) with the centreboard raised. Her main mast, complete with Nitronic 50 stainless steel rod rigging, rises 58m (190’) above the waterline, with the mizzen rising to a respectable 51m (167’).

Like every yacht from the Perini yard, all sailing functions are operated from the exterior helm station on the flybridge using the yard’s signature control system. Sea trials have shown that she performs well in lighter breezes, but is capable in stronger winds of touching speeds of up to 15 knots. Impressively, for a yacht displacing 557 tonnes, she has the feel of a performance-oriented cruiser.

The quality of materials, the level of construction and the attention to detail on board Panthalassa are all consistent with Perini Navi’s exceptional level of execution, and this, combined with the fresh approach to her interior and exterior design, results in a stunning finish that ensures she truly honours her “all sea” name. ■

Panthalassa is available for charter through CNI. In the winter months she will cruise the Caribbean; in summer the Mediterranean.



superyacht design focus

Italian shipyards

Every year at the Monaco Yacht Show, new innovations are unveiled. This year was no exception. Fincantieri revealed a 90m (295') superyacht by H2 Yacht Design, while CRN and Riva announced a unique collaboration to build a 68m (223') yacht. Another groundbreaking design is the 58m x 38m (190' x 124') superyacht by Wally Hermès Yachts, and other new projects were revealed by ISA Yachts, Codecasa and Vitruvius/Perini Navi

By Merijn de Waard



Fincantieri Yachts

Over the years, Fincantieri Yachts has developed a range of yacht projects in collaboration with many well-known yacht designers, including Espen Oeino, Tim Heywood and Nauta Yachts. At the Monaco Yacht Show, the yard unveiled the 90m (295') project Mars, designed by H2 Yacht Design and fully engineered by Fincantieri Yachts' technical team. The brief was to develop a futuristic luxury motor yacht below 3000 GRT, with a relaxed, comfortable and modern interior.

The yacht's upper deck is fully dedicated to the owner, and a lounge, bar and alfresco dining area are found on the aft deck. Inside, one finds a contemporary private family lounge with a large fireplace. Moving forward, there is the lobby with the entrance to the owner's suite. This comprises a large dressing area, office, children's room and the spacious owner's bedroom. From the owner's suite there is access to the foredeck, which is dominated by a huge swimming pool surrounded by sun pads.

CRN Riva

At the Monaco Yacht Show, CRN and Riva, both Ferretti Group brands, announced a collaboration to produce a line of superyachts from 50m to 80m (164' to 262'). The new line will be designed by Mauro Micheli and Officina Italiana Design, the team responsible for the entire Riva range, and will be built and engineered by CRN. The first in the new line is a 68m (223') motor yacht, which resembles the lines of the Riva range. Next is a 50m (164') model, after which a full range will be developed.

CRN Chairman Lamberto Tacoli commented: "It just seemed a natural choice by a group that aims to continue innovating in the yachting industry, and to maintain its leading position in the market. CRN and Riva have been acknowledged as brands of excellence, and our union in this project can only be synonymous with products of high quality and elegance."

Wally Hermès Yachts (WHY)

In June 2008, Wally Yachts and Hermès signed an agreement for a joint venture to develop a new concept of yacht, whereby both companies are fully involved in the creation of the new design.

When asked about the WHY partnership, Pierre-Alexis Dumas, artistic director of Hermès said: "When we met, in autumn 2007, Luca Bassani Antivari, the President of Wally, had thought about asking Hermès to accessorise the interior of one of his boats. I was impressed by the daring nature of his projects. My instinct was to get on board with him and seek out new territories in yacht design."

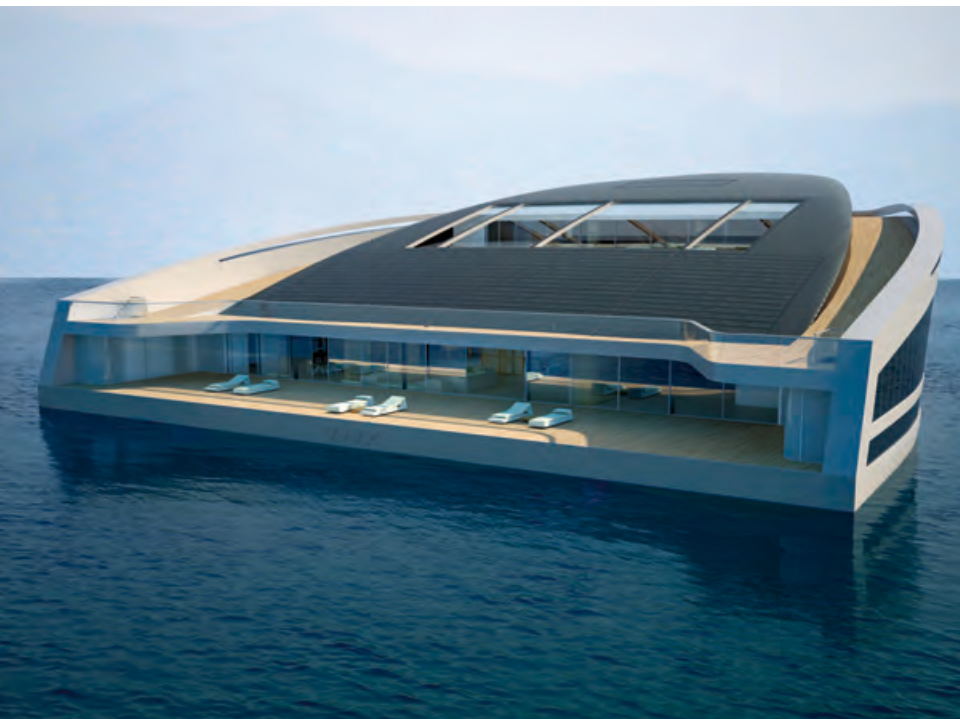
Bassani explains: "What I've always liked about Hermès, aside from its intrinsic quality, is its audacity and radicalism; its desire to go beyond trends, to make no compromises and to maintain the authenticity of the house. Wally shares the same values: 'Hermès-on-Land', 'Wally-on-Sea': inevitably our paths had to cross."

Until the recent Monaco Yacht Show they kept a low profile, but behind the scenes they were working on the design of a superyacht and building a full-size model at the shipyard in Ancona, Italy. The first design revealed by WHY is for a 58m (190') long and 38m (124') wide motor yacht: the WHY 58x38.

The dimensions of the WHY 58x38 (developed from the Ramform hull, which has been tried and tested in Norway), give this megayacht exceptionally high stability and volume when compared to other yachts in her class. With this unique hull adaptation other innovations were made possible, including patios that flood interior spaces with light; a 25m (82') swimming pool on the fore deck, and a 36m (118') aft deck on the sea.

Thanks to the unique hull, the WHY 58x38 requires less power at cruising speed than a yacht of equal size. Her diesel-electric propulsion is the most efficient available →

Above: CRN and Riva's collaboration with Officina Italiana
Opposite page: Fincantieri's 90m (295') Mars



Clockwise from above: the ISA 390 Zero; the revolutionary concept from Wally Hermès; Codecasa's Vintage 42; Perini Navi's Picchiotti Vitruvius; the Benetti Tradition 105

today, and the surface of her photovoltaic [solar] panels is capable of supplying enough energy for most of the boat's auxiliary system needs. The WHY designers optimised energy consumption by improving system isolation, engine heat recovery, and researching the latest trends in wind energy production/propulsion systems. These considerations could save her owner up to 200 tons of diesel per year, compared to yachts of similar size, capacity and use.

ISA Yachts

ISA Yachts from Ancona has released more information on its new ISA 390 Zero, which has been developed in collaboration with Siemens SpA, for the diesel-electric propulsion system, and with MarQuip BV, for the exhaust system.

As the name suggests, the ISA 390 Zero aims to reduce the environmental impact of diesel engines and to improve comfort on board. The emissions will be reduced by catalytic converters on all her diesel engines in conjunction with a particle filter.

The ISA 390 Zero is designed by Andrea Vallicelli, with an interior by Studio Massari. One of the most distinctive features created by Vallicelli is the facade of windows on the stern, which houses a large beach club.

The yacht incorporates two large saloons (one on the main deck and one on the upper deck). The main saloon features a dining area forward and a lounge area aft. The owner's suite is located on the main deck and is extremely spacious with a well-sized bathroom, a walk-in closet and a study.

The lower deck contains either three or four guest suites, depending on the chosen layout, as well as the crew quarters and the crew mess. The three-cabin layout offers a large gymnasium and sauna, while the four-cabin layout is arranged with three double cabins and a twin cabin — all with en suite bathrooms.

The sun deck is divided into several different areas: aft there is a large Jacuzzi and sunbathing area, under the shade of the radar mast is a dining area, and further forward is a panoramic seating area with large, comfortable sofas.



Codecasa

From the Codecasa shipyard in Viareggio comes a new line of Vintage superyachts. The first in the series, the Vintage 42, was unveiled early in 2009, and most recently the family owned shipyard added the Vintage 50 to its portfolio.

The new line has been created by the in-house design team of Codecasa in close collaboration with Della Role Design, who designed the interiors. The idea behind these retro-styled concepts is to incorporate more open deck space, resulting in further sunbathing and outside dining areas.

Both yachts will have an aluminium superstructure and steel hull, will be built to Lloyd's Class and will be MCA compliant. The Vintage 50, powered by twin 2,448hp Caterpillar engines, can cruise up to 6,000 nautical miles, while the Vintage 42, with twin 1,650hp Caterpillar engines can reach up to 4,000 nautical miles. The first Codecasa Vintage 42 will be launched in summer 2011.

Vitruvius & Perini Navi

Two years ago the Perini Navi Group entered the motor yacht market with its Picchiotti brand, and recently a third motor yacht contract for a 73m (240') Picchiotti Vitruvius superyacht was signed. This contract is followed by two smaller sisterships, the 50m (164') Vitruvius explorer and a 55m (180') yacht.

The series is designed by French superyacht designer and naval architect Philippe Briand. The first yacht in the series to launch is the 50 metre, which will be delivered to her owners in 2010. She will be followed by the 55 metre in 2011, and the recently signed 73 metre yacht will be delivered in 2013.

Briand is well known for his sailing yacht designs and he uses his experience to create an optimised and efficient hull form that minimises drag and, therefore, also fuel consumption. As a special feature, the 55 metre Vitruvius Explorer will have a steel ice-classed hull, as her owner wishes to cruise in the Arctic Ocean.

Benetti

Benetti, one of Italy's most famous shipyards, recently unveiled plans for a full range of new superyachts: the Benetti Class. The new Benetti Class will consist of seven models ranging from 27m (90') up to 50m (164'). The first model from the new Class range is the Tradition 105, which replaces the 30m (100') Tradition, and will be launched in summer 2010.

The Tradition 105 has been designed by Stefano Righini with a choice of two interior styles, modern or classical, created by François Zuretti. Like most Benetti superyachts, it offers an abundance of space, the likes of which you would usually find only on larger yachts. The owner's suite, consisting of a bedroom, bathroom, walk-in-closet and separate head, is situated forward on the main deck. Four additional guest cabins, two twins and two doubles are on the lower deck. On the main deck aft is the saloon, adjoining the dining area and galley. The Tradition 105 offers ample space for outdoor entertainment, with two alfresco dining areas, one on the main deck and a second one on the upper deck. The forward section of the upper deck, above the bridge, houses the Jacuzzi and connects to the raised sun deck, which is laid out with sun pads. ■



LOOKING FORWARDS

CNI Listings

The last year has seen an anticipated reduction in the volume of superyacht sales. **Toby Walker**, CNI's Sales Director, summarises the year and looks to the future

Reviewing the past year to date, comparisons show that 176 yachts over 30m (100') have been sold globally, compared to 208 the year before. Every indication is that the market will improve steadily as we approach spring 2010, but what can be done for owners looking to sell their yacht quickly? More than ever, owners need sound, educated advice – particularly with regard to setting a realistic and achievable asking price. There have been commentaries on price adjustments and the need to bring into line the previously optimistic asking prices in the market, but there is no point reducing an asking price, or making it more 'realistic', if the reasons for doing so are simply speculative. Genuine and committed sellers draw on many factors when setting asking prices. A knowledgeable broker should be able to offer a wealth of experience when it comes to comparing similar yachts that have sold or not sold, and can offer advice on the many

elements that influence a sale, not simply limited to currency, location, presentation of the yacht and its age and condition. Furthermore, the marketing of a yacht needs to be greater than just advertising if a timely sale is to be achieved.

CNI's sales brokers have a wealth of experience when it comes to marketing a yacht. Each campaign is tailored to the individual owner and yacht, and the general ethos of focussed marketing and promotion is based on experience, knowledge and expertise – not speculation.

At any one time the CNI brokers have between 120 to 150 yachts listed for sale, and have access to over 1,300 yachts over 24m (80'). The latest listings to join the CNI sales books are an example of the yachts currently on the market. ■

If you would like information on any of the yachts in our fleet, or on our sales and marketing services in order to market your yacht, please contact your CNI broker, see page 6.

MOTOR YACHTS



LEO FUN 53.9m (176' 1) Proteksan Turquoise Yachts, 2009



BARAKA 53m (173' 1) Baglietto, 2009



LADY DAHLIA 47.50m (155' 1) ISA, 2005



PARAIISO 46.60m (152' 1) Feadship, 1983



AFRICA 44.85m (147' 1) Sunrise Yachts, 2009

MOTOR YACHTS



SEDATION 43.65m (143' 2") Heesen, 1997



PURE BLISS 43.30m (142' 1") Palmer Johnson, 1997



ANNAMIA 42.75m (143' 6") Baglietto, 2006



MEA CULPA 42.30m (138' 9") McMullen & Wing, 2003



TRINITY II 42m (137' 9") Benetti, 1991



AMZ 42m (137'9) Marinteknik, 1989



JANGADA 39.80m (130'6) Heesen, 2001



ASET 39.65m (130'1) Overmarine Mangusta, 2007



MELODY NELSON II 34.11m (111'8) Arno Leopard, 2006



LITTLE PARADISE 31.40 (103') West Bay Sonship, 1999

MOTOR YACHTS



MELODY NELSON 28.27m (92' 3) Overmarine Mangusta, 2003



BLUE FLORENTIN 26.80m (87' 11) Bugari Custom Yachts, 2004



YAIZA 25.60m (83' 11) Astondoa, 2000



BLUE TRINITY 25.07m (82' 3) Overmarine Mangusta, 1999



DOROTHEA II 23.50m (77' 1) Hatteras, 2007

SAILING YACHTS



LADY THURAYA 31m (101' 8) Lubbe Voss, 1982



C'EST LA VIE 30.50m (100') CIM, 1988



CLEAR EYES 39m (127' 11) Pax Navi, 2010



TORNADO BLUE 20.60m (67' 7) Nautor Swan, 1993



Before you go...

Travel tales from *Sir Richard Branson*

1. What essential travel items do you take...

- **In your hand luggage en route?** You would think my passport, but I have been known to forget it.
- **In your suitcase for when you get there?** Sunglasses and the normal clothing attire if I am going somewhere hot.

2. What's the first thing you do when you arrive at a new destination?

Open a bottle of Champagne.

3. What are your favourite destinations for:

- **A luxury one-night/weekend stay?** There is nothing finer than a warm Berber welcome at Kasbah Tamadot, tucked in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco. Far enough away but close enough for a quick getaway.
- **A week's charter?** Necker Belle, of course.
- **An extended holiday?** South Africa has a special place in my heart and Ulusaba, our Private Game Reserve, is a magical retreat with the best game sightings of anywhere in Africa.

4. What inspires you to travel?

The people I meet along the way. Life is so rich when touched by so many people.

5. What's your one piece of foolproof advice when it comes to travelling?

Travel with Virgin! Personally, if it's a long flight and I know I have to work at the other end, I try to get as much sleep as possible... I'm not as young as I used to be!

6. Dream destination yet to visit / travel ambition yet to experience?

Space

7. On holiday, do you relax or try to jam in as much as possible?

When I am not attempting some crazy world record, you can definitely find me relaxing and partying when on holiday.

8. Travel light or pack the kitchen sink?

The lighter, the better.

9. Take home only photos – or shop 'til you drop for mementoes?

Only photos. ■

MANGUSTA 165'



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