

## Life at Sea

Taking a yachting vacation means living on a seafaring boat for days or weeks. But because yachting is traditionally a luxury setting, we often consider yachting to be the same as living in a five star hotel that also is free to roam the high seas. But the truth is there will be a different lifestyle on a cruise ship and even the most spacious and luxurious yacht is still a seafaring vessel and it's good to anticipate that lifestyle and be prepared.

There are little things to consider when packing for your yachting vacation. Besides being sure to pack your bathing suit, you must keep in the mind that you are at sea and no amount of luxury or spending can keep the ocean from creating waves under the boat. So if you are prone to seasickness, the proper medications should be brought along and taken before you take your foot off of dry land. Of course, any good yacht will have medical facilities and your crew will keep an eye on everyone onboard, particularly if you are new to yachting. But it's best if you anticipate the need so you don't have to go through a bad experience.

Planning the agenda can help with a problem on yachts that also often sneaks up on people and that is claustrophobia. While many luxury yachts have plenty of open spaces and the rooms and common areas are geared for the ultimate of comfort, the very fact that you are on a boat that you can see the edges of in both directions and on the other side of those railings is the hostile sea can sometimes get to a member of the party. Again, anti-anxiety medications can help calm these fears. But don't keep the members trapped on board for days at a time. Schedule daily outings to shore to enjoy a sunny beach, to shop in quaint markets and to enjoy local foods. These kinds of excursions are fun adventures and can keep the "cabin fever" of yachting under control.

Before you book your charter yacht experience, get a good idea for comfort level of the cabins. While there will be one luxurious master cabin for the sponsor of the trip and some VIP cabins that will also be quite spacious and nice, the guest cabins could be downright confining for others in your party. The best solution of course is to charter a yacht where all of the cabins are as luxurious as an opulent hotel room. By making sure everyone in your yachting party is given accommodations that they will rave about, you don't have someone ending the cruise feeling like they passed the voyage in the slave's quarters.

Before leaving to take possession of your yacht, get a checklist from the yacht charter company so you know how to pack and how much storage you have on board. Even the most magnificent of yacht still has some limitation to storage. So get some dimensions and a physical description of what would be suggested wardrobe

and what kind of facilities will be available. If you know there will be hair dryers, curling irons or even a beauty shop on board, the ladies can leave a lot of their "toys" at home which makes packing and unpacking a lot easier.

Talk about the lifestyle on board the yacht with the party before you board and the expectations in terms of activities and services. In fact, you should know long before you are about to board what kinds of special considerations to have available to your group. The crew captain will have some form of medical expertise on the yacht in the form of a dedicated doctor or a crew member with medical knowledge. Make him aware of any food allergies that the chef should avoid or other medical conditions to be aware of so all necessary equipment and medicines are on board so no medical emergency can disrupt the trip.

By being prepared in advance, you can assure that everyone in your yachting party is aware of how it will be to live at sea for a few days or weeks and the rolling waves and the ample sea air doesn't take them by surprise. And because you made sure to head off problems in advance, your cruise will be a delight for all involved and memories born on your yachting adventure will last a lifetime.

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