

World-class infrastructure and diverse offering further reinforces Dubai's position as a global hub for superyachts

13 Jan 2023, Dubai, UAE



With its world-class infrastructure, advanced facilities, year-round sunshine, luxury marinas, award-winning tourism offerings, rich maritime history and picturesque coastline, Dubai has emerged as the quintessential yachting destination. Following Dubai's participation recently at the Monaco Yacht Show, and the recent Gulf Superyacht Summit 2022 hosted in Dubai under the patronage of P&O Marinas with participation from government and private sectors, industry professionals, thought-leaders, experts, and yacht owners the future is looking brighter for Dubai's yachting industry, with increased investment in marine infrastructure and facilities, streamlined industry legislation, and a proliferation of nautical events set to take place throughout the year.

During the Monaco Boat Show, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) announced upgrades to marina facilities, new legislation, cruising permit extensions, the expansion of professional yachting and maritime academies for new industry talent, and more seamless processes for obtaining charter permits, alongside the streamlining of immigration and customs clearance services, further amplifying Dubai's appeal as a global superyacht hub.

The rapid expansion of this sector has been bolstered by significant investment in yachting facilities and continued enhancement of its offering for yachts, alongside Dubai's vast array of fine-dining restaurants, as well as diverse experiences and tourism attractions, all within close proximity to the marinas. The rapid growth of the industry has led to the unveiling of a number of mega projects including the redevelopment of Mina Rashid as a yachting destination in 2017, and Dubai Harbour - an exceptional seafront district accommodating a wide range of upscale living, retail, hospitality experiences and mooring facilities. Dubai is now home to 15 vibrant marinas with more than 3,000 docking spots, many of which can comfortably accommodate superyachts and mega yachts.

The city's offering is further enhanced and made more alluring by its number of dock and dine options that are available, in addition to its varied destination offerings, spanning many leisure touchpoints from heritage to entertainment, outdoor adventures to beach activities, gastronomy to family-oriented experiences, and from shopping to luxury.

A year-round watersports destination

Dubai's position as a leading yacht tourism destination has been further reinforced by a range of factors with year-round sunshine and cool ocean breeze combining with unmatched aquatic sporting facilities and offerings, including self-drive boat tours, island hopping, jet ski tours, water skiing, paragliding and more, to create unforgettable experiences for yacht tourists. The recent soft launch of P&O Marinas Sailing Academy adds an important facility to host the sport of sailing.

Dubai's position as a leading yacht tourism destination has been further reinforced by a range of factors with year-round sunshine and cool ocean breeze combining with unmatched aquatic sporting facilities and offerings, including self-drive boat tours, island hopping, jet ski tours, water skiing, paragliding and more, to create unforgettable experiences for yacht tourists. The recent soft launch of P&O Marinas Sailing Academy adds an important facility to host the sport of sailing.

Watersports companies throughout the emirate offer a package of experiences that can be provided directly to private yachts, giving thrill seekers the chance to jet ski or waterski past some of Dubai's most iconic landmarks. Dubai-based travel companies are well-equipped to provide a range of water-based pursuits, including diving experiences, fishing trips, snorkeling, scuba diving, and kite surfing, offering guests the chance to explore the magical marine life below the ocean.

A host of lifestyle experiences

Dubai continues to thrive as a popular yacht tourism destination due to its land and sea offerings, as guests can simply hop off their vessels into one of Dubai's luxury marinas and beyond to enjoy a plethora of tourist attractions, gastronomy offerings and retail outlets. When docking in Dubai, tourists can enjoy the city's dynamic gastronomy scene, home to over 200 nationalities and rich in cultural diversity. Similarly, when stopping in the city, visitors can discover Dubai's tourist attractions and visit some of the world's most iconic landmarks, including the Dubai Marina, the Burj Al Arab and Burj Khalifa, whilst extended itineraries include excursions to The World Islands. Alternatively, if guests wish to enjoy a more extensive experience, yachts are available to hire for longer, extended excursions. Moreover, when exploring the emirate, guests can enjoy world-class retail offerings, with the city being home to some of world's largest and most impressive shopping malls, as well as crafts markets and traditional souks. Guests can also enjoy a number of seasonal sales and citywide retail celebrations taking place all through the year, including the world famous Dubai Shopping Festival.

A vibrant events calendar

The city's offering extends beyond luxury marinas and water sports, with many yacht tourists having the opportunity to enjoy Dubai's action packed calendar of events, with exciting activities across sports, music, arts, culture, and food. With a natural interest in yachting activities, yacht tourists are likely to Dubai Boat Show which will be hosted from 1 – 3 March 2023. This is in addition to a number of other sporting events taking place throughout the city including the DP World Tour in January 2023, and Dubai Duty Free Tennis in February 2023 and more. There are also an array of entertainment and theatrical events taking place every month at Dubai's music and entertainment venues including Dubai Opera and Coca-Cola Arena.

An extensive range of partners

Dubai's luxurious marinas and harbours are part of the city's allure as a destination, and yacht tourists and enthusiasts alike can utilise the services of leisure travel companies that operate yacht tours from marinas in the city including Dubai Marina Yacht Club, Creek Marina Yacht Club, Dubai Harbour and Jaddaf Waterfront Marina. A number of quality and safety assured yachting companies offer bespoke itineraries, the latest watersport experiences, along with state-of-the-art nautical equipment, for a safe and refreshing day at sea.

Leading yachting destinations in the city

Dubai Marina is one of the city's most popular neighborhoods and marinas, home to an array of restaurants, attractions, shops and more. Pier 7 is one of the marina's many distinctive dining destinations, with seven different eateries within the building, all of which offer sweeping views of the city.

P&O Marinas is already looking after some of the most exclusive and advanced yachts at Mina Rashid Marina, which boasts 454 wet berths, 160 dry berths, and the capacity to accommodate 60 superyachts without any size restrictions.

P&O Marinas is already looking after some of the most exclusive and advanced yachts at Mina Rashid Marina, which boasts 454 wet berths, 160 dry berths, and the capacity to accommodate 60 superyachts without any size restrictions.

Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club is another one of the city's most visited yachting destinations, with a range of refined beach clubs, restaurants, sporting and leisure activities all within the destination. This marina also incorporates a boat charter operation, fully equipped workshop and a boat repair yard and is the first Marina in Dubai to be ISO Certified, making it the ideal spot for yacht tourists to dock, unwind and hand over to the skilled marina teams to service their vessels. Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club operates two full-service charter vessels from the marina, "Sneak Away" and "Creek Breeze" for all sport fishing and leisure cruising needs. Similarly, a number of other marinas and docking points offer expert private maintenance, so keen yacht tourists need look no further than Dubai's marinas to ensure the health of their vessels. Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club is another one of the city's most visited yachting destinations, with a range of refined beach clubs, restaurants, sporting and leisure activities all within the destination. This marina also incorporates a boat charter operation, fully equipped workshop and a boat repair yard and is the first Marina in Dubai to be ISO Certified, making it the ideal spot for yacht tourists to dock, unwind and hand over to the skilled marina teams to service their vessels. Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club operates two full-service charter vessels from the marina, "Sneak Away" and "Creek Breeze" for all sport fishing and leisure cruising needs. Similarly, a number of other marinas and docking points offer expert private maintenance, so keen yacht tourists need look no further than Dubai's marinas to ensure the health of their vessels.

The city has a range of offerings and amenities for crew, with a range of private clubhouses. At Dubai Marina Yacht Club, crew from across the four registered marinas can enjoy their private cigar lounge, a number of yacht clubs and two restaurants. Similarly, the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club offers crew and professional sailors an array of offerings, which include their Club House, a private hire venue, sailing and cruising lessons and much more.

Yousuf Lootah, Acting CEO of Corporate Strategy and Performance sector, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism, commented: "Dubai continues to grow in stature as a leading marine tourism destination and a global superyacht capital through the combined efforts and support of our valued stakeholders. Inspired by our visionary leadership to position the UAE as the best destination in the world to live in, work and visit, we remain committed to investing in facilities and infrastructure, whilst ensuring that the process for docking in Dubai's marinas is smooth and seamless. We also strive to inspire people by creating new experiences and will continue to play a pivotal role in showcasing the city to the globe as an international superyacht hub and a magnet for marine leisure tourists."

Abdulla Binhabtoor, Chief Portfolio Management Officer, Shamal Holding, the owner and curator of Dubai Harbour said: "Dubai Harbour remains committed to cultivating an extraordinary maritime lifestyle in the city, inspired by our connection to the sea. The seafront district's unique backdrop, iconic vista and accessible location are combined with comprehensive berthing and mooring facilities, providing a maritime gateway that delivers a premier, vibrant and multifaceted yachting experience. Providing a full home port solution in one of the world's most spectacular cruising grounds, Dubai Harbour enables direct access to the open waters of the Arabian Gulf with Dubai Harbour Yacht Club as a reference point for the future of yachting and Dubai Harbour Marinas offering the region's largest marina, featuring close to 700 berths that can accommodate yachts up to 160m in length. We are positive that the superyacht industry holds an exciting future ahead, with a wide range of opportunities available for not only Dubai but also for the nation. We look forward to continuing to play our role in Dubai's ambition to become the most visited city in the world."

Hamza Mustafa, Chief Operating Officer of P&O Marinas, a DP World company said: "Dubai is fast emerging as an ideal global superyacht destination. The emirate has already developed its reputation as a luxury yachting hub with the creation of several high-end marinas, making a key contribution to the nation's economy. P&O Marinas has invested to enhance the UAE's yachting infrastructure. We recently announced a joint venture with Al Seer Marine and MB92 Group to develop a new service centre and refit shipyard in Dubai, and hosted Sail Grand Prix, for the first time in the region. We look forward to collaborating with key industry players as we increase our footprint and reinforce the city's position as a global hub for superyachts and sailing enthusiasts."

Hamza Mustafa, Chief Operating Officer of P&O Marinas, a DP World company said: "Dubai is fast emerging as an ideal global superyacht destination. The emirate has already developed its reputation as a luxury yachting hub with the creation of several high-end marinas, making a key contribution to the nation's economy. P&O Marinas has invested to enhance the UAE's yachting infrastructure. We recently announced a joint venture with Al Seer Marine and MB92 Group to develop a new service centre and refit shipyard in Dubai, and hosted Sail Grand Prix, for the first time in the region. We look forward to collaborating with key industry players as we increase our footprint and reinforce the city's position as a global hub for superyachts and sailing enthusiasts."

Mohamed Alshaali, Gulf Craft Chairman said; "Gulf Craft is proud to have been a key contributor to Dubai and the UAE's marine manufacturing industry and a supporter of the government's ongoing commitment to cementing the emirates reputation as an international yachting destination. 92% of all of our boats and yachts designed and built locally at our fully integrated, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility are exported to proudly fly the UAE flag in ports and marinas around the world. As a UAE born and based manufacturer, our international clients can benefit from a wealth of support services and enjoy the peace of mind of knowing we are on hand when visiting the UAE. With service centres located close to Dubai, as well as our new Gulf Craft Experience Centre in Mina Rashid, we are perfectly located in the heart of the region with capacity and facilities to cater for boats and yachts of all sizes."

For more information on yachting in Dubai please visit: <https://www.visitdubai.com/en/travel-trade/yachting-in-dubai>