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Abu Dhabi: The World's New Super Yacht Destination

Tired of the Mediterranean? Abu Dhabi is the new hotspot for super yacht enthusiasts.

Abu Dhabi- Owning a super yacht is more complicated than one might think. Along with finding a qualified, dedicated crew to operate one, there is also the question of where to put the yacht when not at sea. In the UAE, until recently, acquiring a berth for super yachts was limited to the number of marinas that could accommodate large yachts that are 30 meters or bigger. Owners of super yachts dock them where they would like to vacation; for the high net worth individuals enticed by the rapidly developing cities and intriguing coastlines of the UAE, Kuwait and Oman - destinations that offer a mix of exotic Arabia and 21st Century modernism – there simply were not enough berths to go around to keep their large yachts in the region, whether for personal or charter use.

That is rapidly changing, however, with billions of investment dollars being sunk into the region's marine industry. Along the Arabian Gulf, and Abu Dhabi, in particular, a fascinating series of marinas are taking shape forging the way towards the UAE's capital becoming a charter's paradise. Abu Dhabi, which is the largest emirate of the seven sheikhdoms that make up the UAE, is the world's richest city according to CNN's fortune magazine.

"With over 200 natural islands and more than 700 kilometres of coastline, few places in the world are as blessed with natural waterfront as Abu Dhabi," explains His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority. "Our coastline and abundant islands offer endless exploration and sporting options, and the upcoming Guggenheim, Louvre and maritime museums will also put Abu Dhabi on the map as a premiere 21st century cultural destination."

Working to build a brighter future for the emirate's yachting industry, Aldar Marinas, a subsidiary of Aldar Properties, has identified 16 marine projects in Abu Dhabi, the most impressive of which is Yas Island. Occupying a total area of 10,000 square meters, the development will feature an awe-inspiring and futuristic mega yacht marina, along with a Ferrari theme park, a water park, polo clubs, luxury hotels and luxury retail, all surrounded by a world-class Formula One racetrack. Promising never a dull moment, the island is sure to attract the world's elite and elicit envy from every corner of the globe.

"The Middle east is experiencing an explosion in the number of berths as a response to the boom in the region's property market," says Michael Horrigan, CEO Middle East and Europe of Island Global Yachting (IGY). "The UAE has a strong maritime heritage, but with the creation of some of the world's most unique waterfront developments, the country is has gained massive momentum in appealing to the international yachting community."

In an effort to target yacht enthusiasts, The Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC), with the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, the Headline Sponsor, will host the upcoming 'invitation only' Abu Dhabi Yacht Show 2009 (ADYS 2009). It will be the first yacht show in the region dedicated to super and mega yachts, and ADNEC has commenced dredging a 2.4 kilometer marina zone – featuring a 350 meter quay wall, suitable for stern mooring of over 20 yachts - to cater to the 30-100 meter luxury yachts that will be on exhibit.

"Exports account for 70% of our sales, and the market is rapidly expanding in Europe, especially in the Baltic markets," said Erwin Bamps, Executive Manager of Gulf Craft Inc.. Gulf Craft is the Middle East's leading leisure boat manufacturer. "Large luxury yacht owners – particularly mega yacht owners with boats over 45 meters in length – would definitely enjoy the exciting adventures that interesting coastlines like Abu Dhabi and Oman have to offer."

Expected to attract Middle Eastern royalty and the region's most successful high net worth individuals, ADYS 2009 is set to rival the Monaco Yacht Show in terms of top-tier attendees and prestigious exhibitors. Famous shipyards from Italy, the UK, the USA, France and the UAE will display the latest, high tech, luxury yachts, including the much talked about, high performance super yacht, *Wally Power 36m*, by Wally Yachts - a modern, sleek, 36 meter yacht that is capable of speeds over 60 knots - and 4Yacht Arabia' *Lauren 88.5m*, a massive 88.5 meter luxury yacht featuring futuristic technology to impress the most die-hard Bond fans.

With such an impressive line-up of for super yacht enthusiasts, Abu Dhabi is fast becoming not only the most exclusive yachting destination in the world, but also the most exclusive tourist destinations of all time.

"The Abu Dhabi Yacht Show will be the region's most exclusive and prestigious event of the year," concluded Franck Dailles, Group Director of ADYS. "Industry leaders will display yachts that exemplify the height of luxury in the yachting world. Those seeking to keep a super yacht in this region will find some of the best yachts in the world at ADYS 2009."

The Abu Dhabi Yacht Show - due to take place from March 12-14, 2009 – will be held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC). It will be the region's first super and mega

yachts show. Exhibitors will unveil many new super yachts for the first time at the event, which is expected to attract the region's biggest VIPs.

Headline Sponsor of Abu Dhabi Yacht Show is Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA). Associate Sponsors include ALDAR Properties and Horus Watches. Financial Times is the International Newspaper Partner and Al Arabia is Regional Broadcast Company.

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About Informa Yacht Group:

The Abu Dhabi Yacht Show (ADYS) is organised by Informa Yacht Group (IYG), the leading global Yachting Events Business, and a division of Informa plc, the world's largest publicly-owned organizer of exhibitions and conferences. The current IYG portfolio includes high-end events such as the Monaco Yacht Show, the brand new Abu Dhabi Yacht Show, the Superyacht Cup Regattas, the Phuket International Marine Exhibition, and the World Yacht Racing Forum. The ADYS is a unique yachting event created to meet the demands of a high profile and discerning audience. The ADYS is a by invitation-only show with a very specific focus on super and mega yachts only. With this unique, first-to-market formula, the ADYS will set a new standard in the world of Yachting industry events and provide a world-class super and mega yacht show distinguishing it from other yacht and boat shows across the globe. For more information and full exhibitor list, please log on to www.abudhabi yachtshow.com

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