

5 Star Suite? Not This Summer

Yacht sales climbed 40 percent in 2015 as David Geffen, Katy Perry and other big names pay top dollar to vacation in private

BY KELLY SANFORD

THE HOTTEST TICKET AT the 2016 Cannes Film Festival proved to be an invitation aboard Russian businessman **Roman Abramovich's** 533-foot yacht — the second-largest in the world and worth an estimated \$500 million. Equipped with two helicopter pads, multiple swimming pools, 24 guest cabins and even a missile defense system (to help against pirates), the Eclipse is just one example of how “a yacht offers an environment no hotel can rival,” says **Katya Jaimes**, a charter broker with International Yacht Corporation based in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Katy Perry and **Orlando Bloom** as well as **Kendall Jenner** could be spotted taking advantage of the amenities, but they're hardly the only stars drawn to ships that double as the ultimate symbol of power. In 2015, sales of boats longer than 78 feet climbed 40 percent and, according to yacht brokers Camper & Nicholson International, more than 450



Clockwise: The exterior of Suerte, one of this season's hottest yachts; the living room and dining room. Among its features, the boat offers a 240-gallon aquarium, sea-view sauna and glass-bottomed swimming pool with a waterfall.



mega-yachts were sold, worth a combined value of more than \$3 billion. While in Cannes, **Mick Jagger** hung out on Microsoft mogul **Paul Allen's** palatial 414-foot Lursen yacht, which was built for a reported \$250 million and has its own recording studio. **David Geffen** posted a photo of **Bruce Springsteen** aboard his 454-foot yacht, Rising Sun.

But according to experts, there's a reason aside from luxury and bragging rights that yachting appeals to music's high earners. “Musicians who are on tour most of the year rely on others to do things for them,” says **Rebecca Riley**, a charter broker with Anything on the Water in



Perry



Bloom

Fort Lauderdale. “The yachting industry is used to that — taking even the most outlandish request in stride and doing everything in its power to make it happen.”

Cost generally isn't an issue: According to brokers, stars prefer 200-foot boats with modern lines that charter for \$250,000 to \$1 million per week, not including additional fees (see story, opposite page). Must-have features like those aboard the Italian-made Suerte — one of this season's hottest new yachts that costs \$600,000 per week — include multiple sun decks and swim platforms so grand they are called “beach clubs.” There also are custom control systems that allow guests

to tweak everything from the music, lighting and temperature to the blinds on the windows through a tablet device.

But if Suerte's price tag causes pause, those looking for a chic getaway to the Mediterranean could charter the more modest Rockstar — a 161-foot motor yacht available for \$275,000 a week that offers indoor/outdoor bars and a full-size gym. Or, there's the option of chartering from an actual rock star. The 160-foot Cyan, owned by **U2's The Edge** and **Bono**, is available for \$200,000 per week and includes an outdoor movie theater and a baby grand piano, while **Eric Clapton's** 157-foot motor yacht Va Bene, which sleeps 12 guests in six cabins, charters for \$170,000 per week.

Yachts of this caliber often require a crew of 10 to 15 members who run the boat, launch the tenders and toys (yacht-speak for amenities like three-story inflatable water slides and two-person submarines) and ensure every detail both inside and out is meticulously maintained. “The number one thing celebrities want is a first-rate, can-do crew,” says Riley.

When yachts are no longer docked and go out to sea, for example, the cost of coordinating and shipping makes sourcing even the most mundane items an ordeal. “We once spent \$25,000 to charter a plane for four cases of seedless grapes to go to Grenada,” says **Tim McMillan** of Yacht Chandlers, which has outposts in the Caribbean and France. “We had a client who wanted Wonder Bread and Campbell's tomato soup in Tahiti. It cost over \$1,000 to ship less than \$50 worth of groceries.”

Above all, though, anonymity is perhaps the greatest selling point. When **Jay Z** and



Don't Forget To Add Another \$90K To The Tab

Chartering fees don't include a host of other mandatory expenses. Captain **Carl Sputh** of Starfire (above, inset), the 178-foot yacht that runs \$290,000 per week, offers a sample breakdown of additional fees for a trip through the Med. “The yacht burns about 95 gallons per hour running at 12 knots, so the \$8,000 accounts for all fuel while the yacht is moving to each dock [see route, above],” he says. “When the yacht is anchored we run a generator.”

Customs fees \$5,400	Food and beverages \$8,500	Crew gratuity \$46,000 to \$64,000 (16% to 22%)
Dockage fees \$5,000	Fuel \$8,000	



The Starfire offers a luxe ambiance complete with a massage room.



Clapton



The Edge

Beyoncé took a yacht from Cannes to Nice to Cap Ferrat in September 2015, they were able to do so with maximum privacy from paparazzi. In addition to signing a nondisclosure agreement, crew members who board a celebrity charter on Captain **Marc Wellnitz's** 130-foot yacht to the Caribbean or Mediterranean must adhere to a strict list of rules. For example: “If you need to call home during the charter, you may not mention who you have on the boat. (You can't even tell Mom and Dad.)” Adds Jaimes: “Celebrities can give the paparazzi all the flash and glamour of appearing on a spectacular boat, but once aboard, they have complete control. At their whim, they can choose to entertain; they can close themselves off and have total privacy; or they can leave the harbor and get out on the water.”

SECRETS OF A YACHT CHEF

Preparing meals for A-listers in the middle of the ocean is hardly a cakewalk

As a private-yacht chef, **Tom Voigt**, who is based in Spain and formerly worked as a private chef for **Carlos Santana** and **Backstreet Boys**, is tasked with creating a four-star-restaurant experience for passengers.

The consistent challenge, he says, is coordinating supplies and ingredients. Before taking off, he'll source markets



Voigt

and suppliers local to the destinations the ship will be visiting. Vendors often will travel to meet the ship on a water taxi or, in extreme conditions, by helicopter. “The best thing is when you have time on your own with a taxi to go to a local market, choose the best pieces and send them to the boats and make sure they're coming in the best condition,” he says.

The chef's favorite meals at sea include simple fish and dishes like terrines, ballotines (a stuffed poultry thigh) and galantines (a meat presentation similar to a roulade). Rough waters can make delivery and presentation a logistical nightmare, though. “Seawater blowing over the fresh berries!” says Voigt. “Those things happen.”

But his greatest test is creating a flawless experience as a one-man team. “You're all alone, doing your shopping, your menu creating, your cleaning, your invoicing. People don't realize!” Meals for 12 passengers chartering through Europe for a week will run about \$7,000, and another \$6,000 for fine wine and champagne.

—ADRIENNE GAFFNEY



Voigt's typical sea fare: tomato garden with ricotta cheese and Cantabrian anchovies.



A 3-D rendering of the Migaloo, which will offer passengers views above and below the water. Inset: the floating “island” of Kokomo.

WHICH ROCK STAR WILL BE FIRST TO OWN THE SUBMERSIBLE YACHT?

The paparazzi will need underwater cameras when the forthcoming luxury boat-meets-submarine surfaces

With sales of mega-yachts soaring, marine engineers are constructing an entirely new level of luxury that will sail into the horizon — and below it. Austrian design company Migaloo has begun promoting the first-ever luxe submarine, billed as a more private alternative to yachting (and more expensive; a typical U.S. Navy sub runs \$1 billion to \$2 billion and meets Navy standards).

“Our concept answers the question [of privacy] in a very poetic way; you just submerge into total privacy,” says

managing director **Christian Gumpold**.

Equipped with amenities like a pool and open-air deck — the 930-foot vessel would be able to travel above water while also maintaining the ability to dip below the surface to offer passengers views of coral reefs and underwater wildlife.

And as if that wasn't enough, Migaloo also plans to create Kokomo Ailand — an “island” that floats atop the water like a docking station, complete with spas, hanging gardens, a penthouse suite, helicopter pad and shark-feeding elevator. —WHITNEY BAUCK

SUERTE (BY DUBI BURET); PERRY (DAVE M. BENNETT/AMAR/ADAM BENTLEY/REX USA); BLOOM (ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ/GETTY IMAGES); CLAPTON (BEYSHUTTER/STOCK); EDGE (DAVID FISHER/SHUTTERSTOCK); STARFIRE (COURTESY OF STARFIRE); MIGALOO (COURTESY OF MIGALOO); VOIGT (DORIS COURTESY OF TOM VOIGT).