

# CHOICE FOR CHARTER

What could be more perfect than a charter yacht in the Caribbean, with a crew to tend to your every need. Frances and Michael Howorth take their pick of mid-range yachts at the Antigua Charter Yacht Show

Every year Antigua plays host to the Charter Yacht Show, where sailing and motor yachts show off their credentials to brokers and clients. This year, from 2-8 December, 100 vessels from 50ft/15m to 250ft/75m will signal their availability for hire. We pick a selection in the 65ft/20m to 120ft/38m range as a good size for a Caribbean charter. You can take a sailing yacht on a bareboat basis

if you are an experienced sailor, but it becomes a better holiday when you let the crew take the strain. You can still join in with the sailing, but someone else will take care of finding the best place to go, the perfect anchorage or smartest snorkelling spot. Charter with crew and no one in your party has to sort out provisioning or spend hours in the galley.

Aboard charter yachts at the lower end of our range, with a couple of staff, the atmosphere is casual: crew and guests eat together and the level of service is generally homely. These boats usually operate on Caribbean Terms, which include food, fuel and occasionally drinks as well.

At the higher end of our range yachts have more crew and you can expect the service of a luxury five-star hotel and a greater separation of guests and crew. These larger boats usually operate on Western Mediterranean Terms, meaning that expenses, including food, are extra.

Brokers such as Nicholson Yachts specialise in the smaller yachts and companies like Dubois and Oyster offer yachts from their own stable. Independent agents such as Churchill Yachts and Bernard Gallay offer a very personal service and the big boys like Fraser Yachts, Camper & Nicholsons, Burgess or YPI cover them all.

Here is a selection of our favourites from this year's Antigua Charter Show planning to spend the season in the Caribbean.



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PHOTO: K. JOHNSON





## Ipharra

According to *Forbes* magazine, L'Institut Le Rosey in Switzerland – commonly referred to as Le Rosey or simply Rosey – is the most expensive school in the world. It has many notable alumni, including seven monarchs, earning itself the nickname the School of Kings.

One of its more unusual classrooms is the 102ft/31m superyacht *Ipharra*. At the time she was built in aluminium in 2010 she was one of the biggest cruising catamarans in the world. She was also the first twin-decked sailing catamaran and the third biggest sloop-rigged cat. She can perhaps also add the accolade of being the finest school room in the world.

Available for charter through Sunreef Yachts Charter, the yacht acts as a floating classroom during the summer months when the cream of Rosey's pupils gather on board for a summer

cruise in the Mediterranean. The yacht normally accommodates up to 12 guests and four crew, though up to 18 can be carried when she is in school mode and Pullman beds are used.

The interior combines modern lines with some classic elements of decoration. Dark wenge wood and a lighter anegre are blended together to create strong contrasts and these highlight the geometric composition of the furniture. Trapezoid, square and cube forms are all easily recognisable in the main outlines of in-built furniture, wall shapes, windows and doors.

Her Captain, Lieven Maertens, says that *Ipharra* is a great yacht for groups of friends or large families: "Her exterior space is her biggest attraction. Guests have both the cockpit and the flybridge to live on and they seldom spend the time inside except to rest at night. There are plenty of shaded resting areas with huge sunpads in the

cockpit where guests can enjoy the private cinema scrolling screen."

Diving courses are now offered on board. "We have not one, but two fully qualified and insured diving instructors on board among our crew and all the diving gear needed by guests to get underwater and sample Caribbean subsea life."

The yacht has a full selection of water toys such as kneeboards, waterskis, Laser Vago, two electric seabobs, a kayak and snorkelling gear. Two tenders are available for use – the larger 5.2m is stowed on the aft launching platform and the second hidden in the dinghy garage under the sofa in the cockpit.

**LOA:** 102ft/31m **Builder:** Sunreef Yachts **Crew:** 5 **Guests:** 12 **Captain:** Lieven Maertens **Charter rate:** from US\$75,000 a week plus expenses **Broker:** Sunreef [www.sunreef-charter.com](http://www.sunreef-charter.com)



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## More Magic

"*More Magic* may only be 67ft, but she packs a lot in for her size," declares her captain Alex Whicher, "with three double cabins all en-suite, a large and spacious cockpit that has seen many a dinner party for eight people and a good-sized 3.8m tender."

Alex and Emma are a husband and wife team, who will go that extra mile to fulfil guests' wishes. As an example, Alex says of a charter last year: "To make sure a set of our guests could watch the Royal Wedding, we found a bar with Sat TV in Bequia and arranged for them to open at 0400. We served up the best of all British breakfasts,

bucks fizz and even supplied Union flags to wave as Kate and Will walked down the aisle!"

Emma has been known to forage the shores of Maine to find fresh mussels for a guest's lunch.

"I suppose the way to sum it up," says Alex, "is that we consistently try to live up to the yacht's name, making holidays for clients 'more than magic'!"

**LOA:** 67ft/20m **Builder:** Discovery Yachts **Crew:** 2 **Guests:** 6 **Captain:** Alex Whicher **Charter rate:** from US\$22,500 a week, Caribbean terms **Broker:** Churchill Yachts [www.churchillyachts.com](http://www.churchillyachts.com)



## Tenacious

*Tenacious* is a beautiful 115ft/35m sloop built to the designs of Ted Hood and Andrew Winch, and her David Easton accommodation is laid out perfectly for charter. The light wood finishes ensure it never feels dark below and the full-beam master suite is a luxurious haven with his and hers bathrooms. There are plenty of private nooks for a moment's reflection, and that is unusual on a boat of this size.

Captain Duncan Hipkin and his crew are young and they positively bubble with enthusiasm as they go about their daily tasks. Nothing is too much trouble – we know; we have spent a few days aboard ourselves.

A new Southern Spars carbon rig and 3Di sails have dramatically improved her performance, a fact that her skipper is very excited about.

"Light air performance is something we never really had access to before," Hipkin enthuses, "but by golly we do now . . . The boat does not roll as much at anchor and we are likely to see improved fuel efficiency when motoring."

**LOA:** 115ft/35m **Builder:** Trident **Crew:** 6 **Guests:** 8 **Captain:** Duncan Hipkin and Mike Kopman (on rotation) **Charter rate:** from US\$65,000 a week plus expenses. **Charter broker:** Fraser Yachts [www.fraseryachts.com](http://www.fraseryachts.com)







PHOTOS: R TOMLINSON



## Tilly Mint

The first of the Discovery 67s, *Tilly Mint* was designed by Ron Holland to be sailed round the world by a couple, or chartered with full-time crew. The yacht looks striking, and offers exhilarating performance and top-level accommodation.

Charter guests are always impressed with the abundance of space and luxurious comfort found below, reports captain Bill Haynie.

"Ron Holland never designed a slow boat," he says, "and *Tilly Mint* is no exception. With her modern rig and clever deck/cockpit layout she is

easily handled by two, and often sailed solo . . . We regularly cruise at 9-11 knots and have logged plenty of 200-mile days. This means fast, fun sailing and plenty of speed/time to complete ambitious charter itineraries. One of our favourite charters last season involved a change to the itinerary that added three more islands and 65 miles to the trip.

"We ended up sailing almost ten hours on the final day because the guests didn't want to let go of the wheel!"

LOA: 67ft Builder: Discovery Yachts Crew: 2 Guests: 7 Captain: Bill Haynie Charter rate: Caribbean terms, from \$21,500 a week for 6 guests; \$20,500 for 4 guests; \$19,500 for 2 guests Broker: Nicholson [www.nicholsonyachts.com](http://www.nicholsonyachts.com)

## Sejaa

Nicholson Yachts recently welcomed the beautiful *Sejaa* to their charter fleet. This sleek, cutter-rigged all-aluminium sloop comes from the drawing board of Rolph Vrolijk and is easy to sail by a small crew. Her interior is striking, reflecting a minimalist interior architecture.

There is a large social cockpit just one step away from the steering cockpit. Behind the helm is a spacious sunbathing area. The good-sized transom opens hydraulically to access a large swim platform and tender garage.

Below there is room for six guests or a family of eight in three staterooms. The master suite forward boasts a king-size bed, an en-suite bath, sofa and a small writing desk. There are two mirror-image guest cabins, each with twin beds plus Pullman and en-suite bathrooms.

The yacht's Swedish crew include Captain Hakan Norberg who was an officer in the Royal Swedish navy. He has spent the past eight years



sailing round the world on charter yachts and has over 85,000 sea miles under his belt.

He is also a keen downhill skier, certified diver and squash player. His crewmate, Sussanne Akerlund is a talented chef with lots of experience working on ships and yachts for many years.

LOA: 115ft/35m Builder: JFA Chantier Naval, France Crew: 3 Guests: 8 Captain: Hakan Norberg Charter rate: from US\$30,000 a week Caribbean Terms Broker: Nicholson Yachts [www.nicholsonyachts.com](http://www.nicholsonyachts.com)





## A brace of Swans

Cast your eyes around any popular Caribbean anchorage and chances are high that you will see a Swan or two. The big boats are in their element out here and Clancy Weller MacDonald, charter manager at Camper & Nicholson's International, raves about one she manages.

The 82ft/25m *Inukshuk* (pronounced in-ook-shook), built in 2009, is in her opinion a "sexy yacht" that offers the romance and thrill of sailing with more than a touch of luxury.

"The best thing about her is her luxurious interior and superb crew who provide every comfort imaginable, while her exhilarating performance under sail provides excitement." The yacht is ideally suited for three couples.

Her captain, Barend Smith, offers a wealth of advice: "When we are in the Virgin Islands, I often take guests in a tender and follow the snorkel trail around Trunk Bay, one of the most beautiful beaches in the British Virgin Islands."

Another from the Swan stable is the bigger 112ft/34m *Highland Breeze*, an elegant, modern yacht. Built as *Eratosthenes*, this Swan 112 is often seen on the superyacht regatta circuit. Her jet blue hull, white superstructure, teak decks, mahogany interior and her size, power and modernity make her successful round the cans and popular on the charter circuit.

Charter manager Alex Garro comments: "She has a charm and spirit that only sailing yachts can offer, yet she is endowed with exceptional comfort, vast deck areas and the latest high-tech equipment."

She sleeps eight guests in three spacious double cabins. Her master cabin aft has a queen-size bed and a lounge area with writing desk. This cabin also has satellite TV, DVD and video. The remaining two cabins have twin beds, each with a Pullman bunk.

Captain Albert Keularts loves to take guests to Antigua and Barbuda and says: "When seeking pure relaxation and white sandy beaches, I always recommend we should head straight for Barbuda where we can all enjoy this quiet island with its stunning beaches."

### *Inukshuk*

LOA: 82ft/25m **Builder:** Nautor's Swan **Crew:** 4 **Guests:** 8 **Captain:** Barend Smith **Charter rate:** from US\$39,500 a week

### *Highland Breeze*

LOA: 112ft/34m **Builder:** Nautor's Swan **Crew:** 5 **Guests:** 6-8 **Captain:** Albert Keularts **Charter rate:** from US\$60,000 a week **Broker:** Camper & Nicholson's [www.camperandnicholsons.com](http://www.camperandnicholsons.com)



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## Cape Arrow

Try this yacht if you have an eye for some competitive racing. *Cape Arrow*'s extensive list of toys and tenders could make you forget that she has performed well in every regatta this season, reaching speeds approaching 30 knots. Coupled with elegance and luxury aboard, this super-sleek sailing machine is a real cut above the rest.

Designed by Farr/Nauta Design *Cape Arrow* does not compromise on comfort and privacy. Her wide cockpit allows guests the freedom to choose whether to soak up the sun, erect a bimini or simply admire the scenery.

Guests can relax in the spacious and luxurious main saloon or the modern dining/conversation area,

which can accommodate up to eight people with ease. There are two double cabins with en-suites, a VIP cabin and master stateroom.

Captain Andrea Balzarini says: "I do so like the deck saloon, which is spacious, allowing guests to enjoy the exterior of the yacht, such as the central cockpit. The soft cushions of the sunbathing area and the open transom are tempting for those who want to soak up the sun."

LOA: 99ft/30m **Builder:** Southern Wind Shipyard **Crew:** 4 **Guests:** 8 **Captain:** Andrea Balzarini **Charter rate:** from €35,000 a week plus expenses **Broker:** Bernard Gallay [www.bernard-gallay.com](http://www.bernard-gallay.com)

## OYSTER YACHTS



## Oofle Dust

Molly Marston, charter manager with Oyster Charter, tells us this yacht will be based in the Caribbean for the winter season.

*Oofle Dust* has an extended stern which creates a large aft deck area that makes for great entertaining and sunbathing. The split cockpit gives her a superyacht feel with twin wheels and a spacious, protected guest cockpit. Large fitted tables make for some serious alfresco dining. She is beautifully balanced and light on the helm with equally impressive light airs performance

Below deck the interior is cherry wood with warm beige leather

upholstery. The guest accommodation is located abaft the main saloon with three generous cabins each with en-suite heads. This gives guests privacy from the galley and en-suite crew accommodation forward of the saloon.

The upper saloon provides a panoramic vista. The lower saloon has comfy seating and a movie system, an ideal set-up for families, allowing the adults to continue enjoying after-dinner conversation while the children watch TV or play games in the lower saloon.

LOA: 85ft/26m **Builder:** Oyster **Crew:** 3 **Guests:** 6 **Captain:** Jasper Emmer **Charter rate:** \$34,000 a week Caribbean Terms **Broker:** Oyster Charter [www.oystermarine.com](http://www.oystermarine.com)





## Selene

Ideal for small groups, first-time charterers and families, the Swan 80 *Selene* is a luxurious sailing yacht that offers a true sense of escape. An extensive refit in 2009 has given her three cabins an airy beach-house style with seaside paintings and seashell motifs.

The large outdoor seating area has room for the entire family or regatta crew. At night this area becomes a romantic space for stargazers and

food aficionados, with its comfortable seating and wooden folding table.

Her captain Ben Davitt points out that: "Unlike many other yachts, *Selene* comes equipped with fishing gear in addition to a range of inflatables and snorkelling accessories."

LOA: 80ft/24m **Builder:** Nautor's Swan **Crew:** 3 **Guests:** 6 **Captain:** Ben Davitt **Charter rate:** from \$32,000 a week **Broker:** YCO [www.ycoyacht.com](http://www.ycoyacht.com)



F TACCOLA



## Skip'N Bou

This 79-footer accommodates a total of six guests in two twin en-suite cabins and a forward master suite with shower room. She provides enough space for comfortable cruising with family or friends. Yet with performance very much in mind this is another yacht that is just crying out to be taken round the cans.

Built by Southern Wind and launched in 2003 as *Acaia*, she is a sleek, fast cruising yacht, an excellent example of the bold naval architecture of

Farr Yacht Design combined with the impressive exterior styling of Nauta Design. The elegant interior, also created by Nauta, features a large panoramic deck saloon with 270° views.

Andrea Pothier, charter manager at brokers Yachting Partners International, says of the yacht: "While the crew areas ensure your privacy is respected, her renowned and highly respected captain, Philippe Lechevalier, (ex-*Eleonora* and *Moonbeam IV*), and his professional crew of two are never too far away."

She claims the crew, which includes chef and steward, offer five-star service similar to that provided on yachts double the size.

Snorkelling equipment, waterskis, kayak and numerous inflatables are all available on board.

LOA: 79ft/24m **Builder:** Southern Wind shipyard **Crew:** 3 **Guests:** 6 **Captain:** Philippe Lechevalier **Charter rate:** from US\$25,000 a week **Broker:** Yachting Partners International [www.ypigroup.com](http://www.ypigroup.com)

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