

THE COMMERCIAL^{/65} COURIER

THE OFFICIAL BUSINESS MAGAZINE OF THE MALTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY SINCE 1947

APRIL / MAY 2016

Deceptive simplicity

The art of Debbie Caruana Dingli

NEWSPAPER POST

GOLD
COLLABORATING
PARTNERS

BOV
Bank of Valletta

HSBC 

IN THIS ISSUE

LAUNCHING MALTA'S FIRST OFFICIAL BUSINESS PORTAL / TRACKING THE SUCCESS OF THE LOCAL MARITIME SECTOR / BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER ROB LUKE TALKS TERRORISM, UK-MALTA TIES AND BRITAIN'S POTENTIAL EXIT FROM THE EU / OUTGOING MBB PRESIDENT MARIO SPITERI ON THE ORGANISATION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY / HEAD OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATION IN MALTA DR ELENA GRECH DISCUSSES PRIORITIES / FACEBOOK POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT SPECIALIST ELIZABETH LINDER ON TECHNOLOGY, FACEBOOK AND THE HUMAN CONNECTION / THE LATEST BUSINESS NEWS

Beyond ordinary

One of the modern markers of luxury is ownership of a fully-staffed yacht, allowing you to charter your own maritime journeys and relax in five-star luxury in the middle of the sea. However, this is inaccessible to all but the staggeringly wealthy – or is it? **Marie-Claire Grima** talks to Azure Ultra managing director **Perry Newton** about the joys of private yacht chartering and the benefits driving many to fractional ownership.

The Sunseeker name is synonymous with a lavish lifestyle. From paparazzi pictures of celebrities winding down and relaxing on board a spacious Sunseeker deck, to the yachts' regular appearances in the luxury eye candy that is the James Bond film franchise, embarking upon one of these deluxe British-built yachts guarantees VIP treatment and accommodation that would put any top-ranking hotel to shame. So it's no surprise that Azure, the deluxe Malta-based hospitality company specialising in five-star hotels, luxury resorts, opulent residences and exclusive vacation clubs, has added three yachts to its luxury vacation product collection, under the banner of Azure Ultra.

"Our core business is the chartering of yachts from our base in the world-class Grand Harbour Marina in Birgu. We offer fixed price and longer duration charters around the Maltese archipelago and beyond. Our bespoke packages offer long-term charters in Mediterranean, Tyrrhenian, Ionian, Ligurian and Adriatic waters," says Azure Ultra's managing director Perry Newton.

"A luxury charter yacht experience is one of life's greatest pleasures with an appeal that crosses generations like few others. Many special occasions or anniversaries can be taken beyond ordinary with a luxury yacht experience – from an exciting twist on a birthday party to newlyweds boarding on the adventure of their lives to couples

celebrating many years of marriage by sailing off into the sunset. On the other hand, it's an excellent option for corporate events and functions too. A business charter package with VIP treatment and the services of a fully-qualified captain and stewardess certainly sends a message to your clients that your company means business!

"A luxury charter yacht experience is one of life's greatest pleasures with an appeal that crosses generations like few others."



"Owning a luxury yacht is not for the faint-hearted. However, our smart plan brings in ownership of a luxury Sunseeker yacht at a fraction of the full purchase price."

styling, cutting-edge technology and fine furnishings, accommodating 12 guests and sleeping eight while berthed and six at sea. There are four two-berth cabins including the VIP Stateroom, VIP ensuite Shower Room and the Master Stateroom, with the fourth used as either a guest cabin or crew accommodation.

Don't Ask, a 61-foot-long Sunseeker Manhattan 56 with a range of 270 miles has a light and airy interior – it's known as the family yacht as it has a Master Stateroom and two twin cabins. The yacht accommodates 10 guests, sleeping six while berthed and four at sea. Both these vessels hold an international licence, which allows them to sail outside Maltese waters.

Meanwhile, for those who prefer to keep their cruising within Maltese territories, *Miss Moneypenny*, the third member of the fleet, is a deceptively spacious 49-foot long Sunseeker Portofino 46, with a huge deck area which is perfect for sunbathing. With a comfortable cruising speed of 24 knots, it sleeps four while berthed and two at sea, and has a licence for Maltese waters. The company is planning to add more boats to the fleet in the near future as the popularity of chartering yachts continues to gain traction.

In addition to yacht ownership, Azure Ultra also offers flexible member-exclusive options. These include the ability to exchange yacht usage with a choice of prestigious accommodation in prime locations around the world. Members also have the option of putting their entitlement into a charter pool, giving Azure the ability to charter yachts

to clients on their behalf, allowing them to generate income during periods when it's not in use.

Besides its immediate plans to expand its fleet of luxury yachts, does Azure have any other ideas in the pipeline? "Azure is a well-established and highly respected facilitator in the luxury holiday and leisure industry," Perry says. "We intend to remain so for many years to come, continuing to develop and expand our range of high-end products. Our challenge for the future will be catering to the ever more sophisticated, increasingly demanding holiday-makers and luxury leisure seekers. Azure is ready for that challenge and is determined to continue evolving and adapting to provide the highest quality service for all our clients." **cc**

