

Yacht Etiquette for First Time charter guests

Top ten yacht etiquette tips for first-time charter guests

Chartering a yacht is one of the most exclusive holidays available. Offering facilities that would rival that of a five-star hotel. Complete privacy for you and your guests and a dedicated crew who will ensure your every requirement is met. It's easy to understand why so many people are now choosing yacht charter as their holiday of choice. However, stepping on board can also be quite daunting for those who have never chartered a yacht before. People often don't know what to expect. And, the yacht etiquette at sea can be very different from that of a normal hotel or cruise liner.

1. Treat the yacht as if it's yours

The one benefit of a luxury yacht is that your five-star accommodation is also your transport. It provides the ultimate opportunity for you to relax and enjoy your time on board. Your Captain and crew will always want you to feel at home; and treat the yacht as if it's your own. Luxury yachts will be decorated and outfitted to an extremely high standard, however. So care should be taken when on board as you may be charged for any breakages or damage!



Image by @yachtluckylady

2. Provide as much information as possible on your preference sheet

Prior to your arrival, you will receive a preference sheet. This is a document where you provide the crew with as much information as possible; everything from your party's dietary requirements to sleeping arrangements. Your Captain and crew will always appreciate as much information as possible to ensure they are fully prepared for your trip. Share anything that you feel is important and will make your charter the holiday of a lifetime.

3. Treat the crew with respect

The crew are there to create the ultimate holiday experience for you and your guests. However it is important to treat them with respect and ensure that your requests are reasonable and achievable. Rest assured, they will always ensure that they accommodate these wherever possible. But, making any requests in a fair and polite manner will always be greatly appreciated.

4. Factor a tip into your budget

It is customary to tip your crew between 10 – 15% of the charter fee in recognition of a high standard of service. Any gratuity should be presented to the Captain at the end of your trip to ensure that tips are divided equally amongst the crew, including those who are essential but not always seen by the guests.

5. Respect the crew's personal space

Although you will have the full run of most of your yacht, your crew will also have their own designated area where they sleep and undertake their day-to-day duties. It's important you respect these areas and don't enter unless specifically invited. This also includes the galley (or kitchen for those who are new to yachting terms), where your chef will spend a lot of time preparing meals.



Image from @yachtbellavita

Should you want any refreshments at any point of your charter, a quick call to one of your stewards will ensure you have everything you need. The stewardesses will regularly check in with you to ensure you have everything you could ever want.

6. Be prepared to go barefoot

Due to the bespoke nature of a yacht, and the fact that many vessels boast custom carpets or exotic floor coverings, many

Captains will impose a no-shoes rule meaning you will need to go barefoot, wear yacht provided slippers or a new pair of boat shoes on board. This will be communicated upon your arrival and should be respected at all times.

There will always be a clean and secure place provided to put your shoes.

7. Always report any issues to the Captain

In the unlikely event that you have any issues throughout your trip, a key aspect of yacht etiquette is to always raise these to your Captain instead of taking matters into your own hands. Whilst on board, your captain is the only person with authority, and they will ensure any matters are dealt with appropriately and promptly.

8. Do not break the law

Yachts operate a zero-tolerance policy for anything illegal or illicit and the Captain will pass any matters over to the relevant authorities if anything was to happen on board. In most countries, this will be treated very seriously and could involve jail time or hefty fines.

9. Check your yacht's water sports policy

Depending on your yacht and the waters you are sailing in, different regulations may apply to the water sports toys available on board. Although in most instances many will be fine for you to use under the supervision of your crew, more specialist equipment such as jet skis or fishing gear may

require tuition or even a license to use. Should this apply, your crew will be able to arrange for any relevant paperwork or training. However, it's best to bring this up with your charter broker prior to embarking. This will ensure the necessary arrangements can be made in advance.



Image by @shahardyharhar

10. Ensure you're aware of all of the

costs

In most instances, the cost of the charter is solely to cover the use of the yacht, crew, insurances, and use of any water toys (as specified). There is also often an APA (advanced provisioning allowance) applicable on top of your charter fee which covers any additional expenses. These include fuel, food, drinks as well as harbour and marina fees (other than those of the yacht's home port). The APA is usually budgeted at around 25-30% of the charter cost. However, you will only pay the cost price for what you use. Any funds not required will be returned to you at the end of your trip. Likewise, should you go over this you will be asked to make a payment to cover your additional expenses.

Have you got any more yacht etiquette tips?

Read West Nautical's yacht charter FAQ's here:
<http://www.westnautical.com/frequently-asked-questions/>

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