

# Seastainable Yachting – Driving Change

In recent years there has been an ever-increasing dialogue surrounding sustainability and the yachting industry. From shipyards pioneering green technology and yachts offsetting their carbon emissions to crew uniforms produced from ethically sourced and sustainable materials and eco-friendly cleaning products – this dialogue is slowly being put into action with the help of Seastainable Yachting – A new start-up founded by yacht stewardess, Gemma Harris.

Gemma launched Seastainable Yachting earlier this year, with a simple mission – *to drive change, from the bottom up.*

## What is Seastainable Yachting, and how did it come about?

We are a new platform that provides resources and information, in order to make running a boat more sustainable and aim to make that process a simple and easy one for yacht crew. I had witnessed first hand the number of unsustainable practices that are in operation across the industry and Seastainable was also partly born out of frustration – I was spending so much time researching products and methodologies for doing things more sustainably, that I found myself wishing for a central hub where I could access sustainable resources and information relevant to yachting.

## What are you trying to achieve with your platform, and what services do you offer?

We are still in the early stages and at the moment, we are providing information resources for yacht crew through our website and social media channels. We launched our first handbook at the end of June, which is an introductory, downloadable resource for yacht crew outlining our Seastainable Steps ([download it here!](#))

Through these resources, we want to unpack all of the 'eco-friendly' information out there and translate it into easy-to-use resources, relevant to yachting. We also publish weekly blog posts and send a monthly newsletter on sustainable topics, as well as collaborating with key sustainability players in the industry. Our second phase of the launch will see us start to supply products and services, which will make it easier to run a sustainable yacht. These partners will be trusted businesses, which are sustainable in their ethos and product/service. At the moment, ease of use and understanding are the main barriers preventing change, and we want to help yacht crew overcome this. By putting everything on one platform, we are making it easy for the crew to facilitate change implement more sustainable practices.

## What do you think about the industry's approach to sustainability so far?

In recent years we have already seen some key catalysts for change, such as the rise of the eco-conscious yacht owner, shipyards moving into greener operational technology and

production methods, and more environmentally aware yacht crew. There are also external pressures coming from international legislation for carbon emissions and media influences. Due to the nature of the industry and its unique connection with the ocean, it has huge potential and opportunities to drive change. We see so much forward-thinking innovation and attention to detail throughout the industry, which can and should be used to facilitate new sustainable processes.

Many people are of the mindset that the yachting industry simply can't be sustainable, but this is a defeatist view. It is a huge task, and we understand that the journey to a sustainable yachting industry is a very long one, but Seastainable Yachting is prepared to do the legwork. There are many steps we can all take, which will have an immediate positive impact and needn't affect the quality and luxury that the industry is founded upon. Sustainability doesn't have to be a compromise; there are viable alternatives out there that are no longer second best.

## **When it comes to the multifaceted topic of sustainability, what is Seastainable Yachting focusing on?**

Sustainability is an all-encompassing and vast topic, it isn't as simple as switching to green cleaning products – although that is an amazing start! It is a three-dimensional concept whereby the economic, social, and environmental processes are all interconnected. We aim to bring awareness to all areas of sustainability. A sustainable yachting industry needs to encompass everything the industry does, from the products it uses and the wellbeing of the crew to the impact a yacht has upon its cruising area. Our resources are being developed to eventually cover all areas of sustainability, whilst working in line with our foundation pillars of knowledge, mindset, and

action. We believe sustainability should be a top priority and, eventually, a standard for the industry to adhere to.

## **If there is one thing that crew can change today, what would you suggest they do?**

As mentioned, sustainability is such a huge topic and sometimes that's the hardest thing – there are so many things that you can do, that a lot of crew don't know where to start and are overwhelmed by the whole concept. One of the most important things crew can do is to open up the sustainability conversation onboard, integrate it into the crew's mindset, and then begin to implement change step by step. Crew can sometimes be reticent to change because they think that they are such a small part of the industry, but actually, this change can be driven from the bottom up. At Seastainable, we talk about the power of the individual a lot and how crewmembers can really make a difference. It simply took billions of unsustainable decisions and actions to get us here today, so it will take billions of sustainable ones to reverse this. Our introductory handbook highlights small changes crew can take using our Seastainable steps, and this is free to download from our website.

# 5 WAYS

## TO REDUCE YOUR IMPACT As yacht crew

1 Eco friendly cleaning products & toiletries



2 Seasonal & local menus



3 Pay attention when anchoring/snorkelling  
(protect reefs & seabed)



4 Recycling and correct waste disposal



5 Use reusables (no disposable plastic e.g  
water bottle, straws, cups)



## How are you facilitating the bottom-up approach?

The yachting industry is extremely niche and already has a strong sense of community – we want to emphasise this. We want to bring shared passions and interests in conserving our industry and oceans together.

In August, we will open applications for our crew ambassador program. This program will be an opportunity for the like-minded crew to get involved and join our mission whilst sharing their journey of change with others. We will create a community of ambassadors who will drive a culture of change. In turn, feedback from the program will help us better refine

and expand our resources.

## **What do you think the future holds for Seastainable yachting? Can the industry ever be sustainable?**

Long-term, definitely. The industry has so much power to drive change, what with its affluent clientele, forward-thinking solutions, and innovative technology. Quite simply, the industry will not survive without implementing more sustainable measures. There is huge scope for positive change, and it's the right thing to do.

Visit [www.seastainableyachting.com](http://www.seastainableyachting.com) to find out more.

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