

TRAVEL

The perfect scene

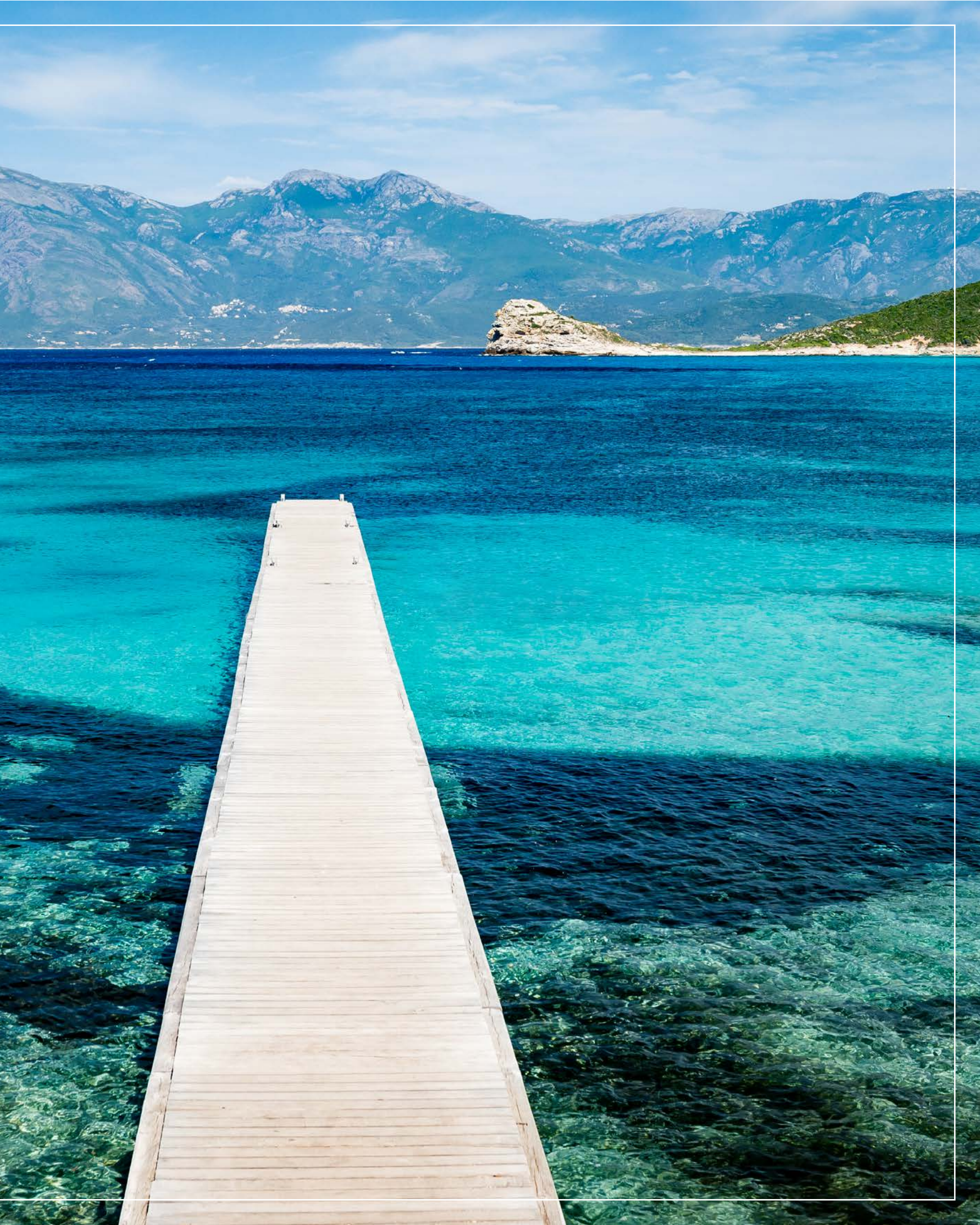
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Providing the perfect combination of effortless charm and elegance, the cruising grounds of the Western Mediterranean are the best-loved in the world

The azur blue waters have been luring visitors for centuries, but it was not until the 1950s that they became populated with yachts. From the glamorous seafront towns of the Côte d'Azur and the Amalfi Coast to the Balearics, Corsica and Sardinia, their shorelines have undeniable cruising appeal. They are at their busiest throughout July and August, but here the experts from Camper & Nicholson's steer you away from the crowds to discover the more peaceful and scenic anchorages, the lesser-known best restaurants ashore, and the favourite hang-out's for those in the know.

IMAGE A pier extends into the crystal blue waters off Corsica







Balearics

MAJORCA, MINORCA AND IBIZA

It is now much easier to charter a yacht in the Balearics as the regulations have changed. A number of the Camper & Nicholsons charter fleet, including the big Sunseekers *Blush* and *Thumper*, are heading to the trio of islands this summer. In all the key areas there are large marinas, but for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the jetty, then there are plenty of peaceful anchorages to be found. The small, uninhabited island of Espalmador, to the north of Formentera is well protected from the elements and the clear waters lap pure white sands.

“Take the tender or swim ashore and bathe in the natural mud baths at the heart of the island,” recommends Captain Matt Callaway on board the 47.24m (155’) motor yacht *Blush*. Alternatively, Na Foradada in Mallorca is one of the most enchanting anchorages in the Balearics. “I always recommend heading to Na Foradada for the amazing sunset,” says charter broker Anne Sterringa. “As the sun goes down, the wild and untouched Sierra de Tramuntana mountains are illuminated in a spectacular display of colour.”

Many of the beaches in the Balearics draw a crowd, but away from the well-known pockets of commercialism are scenic coves, many of which are only accessible by boat, making them wonderfully private. Difficult to access by land, the pebbled-beach of Sa Calobra remains relatively empty bar a few of the yachting crowd in the know. “Sitting between two huge

cliff faces, which provide a stunning back drop whether at anchor or on the beach, this is one of my favourite spots in the Balearics,” says Captain Tom Filby on board the 44m (144’4) motor yacht *Blue Vision*. “Another great beach on Mallorca’s west coast is Cala Tuent. Surrounded by mountains and pines, the coves are perfect for kayaking and other water sports.”

During your cruise you may want to jump in and snorkel or dive to explore the underwater world. The Cabrera National Park is a haven for flora and fauna and offers the most interesting dive sites in the Balearics. “Just ensure that permits have been pre-organised by your captain or charter broker,” says Captain James Harbord on board the 40m (131’5) motor yacht *Thumper*. “For those looking to snorkel rather than dive, the shallow waters lapping Benirras Beach on Ibiza are a great place.”

The restaurants in the Balearics range from beachside tavernas to fine dining establishments. From traditional cuisine to delicious tapas, there are plenty of gourmet choices when you step ashore. “One of the best places to sample the local dish caldereta de langosta (lobster stew) is at Es Cranc on Menorca,” recommends charter broker Anne Sterringa. “For a combination of Mallorquin and French cuisine then Bens d’Avall is located in an ideal spot on the water’s edge with stunning views over the Tramontana mountains.”

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Captain Ivica Mise on board the 33m (108') motor yacht *Casino Royale* recommends the Hotel Cap Rocat in Mallorca for special occasions. "Set in a former military fortress on the cliffs of Mallorca's south coast, Cap Rocat overlooks the Bay of Palma," says Captain Mise. "Enjoy sunset cocktails in traditional tents on the terrace before dining in the gourmet fortress restaurant, La Fortaleza. Reservations are essential."

The family-run La Paloma restaurant is an Ibiza institution. Located in a restored finca, by day it is a café but by night it is the very definition of laid back bohemian indulgence serving a combination of Italian and Spanish cuisine. For something quite different, Sublimotion is a unique experience where gastronomy is fused with technology. Located in the Hard Rock Hotel, guests to Sublimotion enjoy a 20-course gastro-sensory meal. "Hard to explain, it really has to be experienced for oneself," says charter broker Molly Browne. "The restaurant's walls are a virtual light show, and moving pictures are projected on the tabletops, including a garden scene and Versailles-style paintings."

Alternatively, Heart is the latest offering of the Adria brothers (of El Bulli fame). Located in the Grand Hotel, this is another experiential dining concept. "Art, performance and cuisine come together in one location to provide a sensory overload," says Molly Browne.

"The Adria brothers are one of Spain's most prized gastronomic duo, while Guy Laliberte, founder of Cirque du Soleil, adds his artistic genius to provide a totally unique experience, for which the island is famed."

The Balearic Islands are, of course, known for their beach clubs. Sink your toes into the sand and spend lazy afternoons with the glitterati enjoying the sunshine and sunset accompanied by chilled music with the following recommendations.

Anchor off the coast and take the tender ashore to Cala Jondal, one of Ibiza's best beaches, where Blue Marlin is the focal point. "The club has a relaxed pace throughout the day, and as the sun sets the vibe picks up a beat or two," says charter broker Cristabel Nye. Less brash than the Blue Marlin, Beachouse on Playa d'en Bossa is the place to head on a Sunday.

"For those looking for something more glam than boho, then the clifftop hangout and beach at the Cotton Beach Club is popular for lunch with a view, or a smart supper," recommends Captain Janusz Walinski on board the 62m (203'5) motor yacht *RoMa*. "Another popular spot for both lunch and spectacular sunsets is the effortlessly cool Experimental Beach. While most beach clubs close at sunset, Experimental Beach is as much somewhere to go at night, or stay as lunch blurs into sunset and dinner."



TOP The beautiful Tramuntana mountains on the western side of Mallorca MIDDLE Cotton Beach Club is the epitome of Ibiza relaxation BOTTOM The 62m (203'5) motor yacht *RoMa*

Côte d'Azur

SOUTH-EAST FRANCE

The most celebrated spots of the Côte d'Azur lie between St Tropez and Monaco. In the summer season almost 80 percent of the biggest charter yachts are to be found somewhere off the 65-kilometre coastline that is the epicentre of yachting. Glamorous seaside towns and several marinas dot the coastline, but there are also ample natural harbours and pretty anchorages for those wishing to escape the crowds.

The horseshoe-shaped Bay d'Agay, between St Tropez and Nice, is a pretty harbour fringed by beaches. "It's a peaceful anchorage and an ideal spot for an afternoon of water sports," recommends charter broker Sussie Kidd. Another quiet anchorage can be found near Antibes. "Lying opposite Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc, St Honorat is home to monks who, having taken a vow of silence, keep quiet about the celebrities who come ashore to taste wine from their eight-hectare vineyard," says Captain Charles Bushell on board the 42.6m (140') motor yacht *Hana*. "The last ferry to Cannes departs early evening and so you will enjoy an anchorage of solitude with only the lapping waves and the monks chanting to lull you to sleep."

Dominating French cuisine along the sun-soaked Riviera are a handful of superchefs, such as Alain Ducasse and Joël Robuchon, but don't miss the culinary treats to be had at local, low profile establishments. Hidden on a hilltop in Menton,

Mirazur is a terrace restaurant with its own citrus grove and avocado trees. Argentinian chef, Mauro Colagreco, serves three tasting menus of tapas, followed by starters using fresh vegetables from the garden, and main courses of fresh fish. Also located in medieval hilltop villages are the iconic restaurants La Chèvre d'Or in Eze and La Colombe d'Or in St Paul de Vence. Both are wonderful venues affording spectacular views over the Mediterranean. "Dine in front of original works of art by Picasso, Matisse and Braque while enjoying authentic Provençale cuisine at La Colombe d'Or, or enjoy Michelin-starred cuisine at the outdoor restaurant at La Chèvre d'Or."

Back on the coast, the Hotel du Cap Eden Roc is a must for a special occasion. "You can dine on the terrace of the Eden Roc Pavillion while overlooking your yacht anchored alongside in Cap d'Antibes. This is a quintessential Côte d'Azur experience made unforgettable by the Mediterranean cuisine of chef Arnaud Poette," says Captain Emile Coetzee on board the 53.5m (175'6) *Hurricane Run*.

"Appropriately named Eden, the restaurant provides a bird's eye view over your yacht anchored 200 metres below" recommends charter broker Sussie Kidd. "Reservations are essential at both of these spectacular dining establishments."

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PREVIOUS PAGE Mariano Caffé, Mirazur
TOP The five star Château de la Chèvre d'Or on the French Riviera MIDDLE The 43.6m (143') *Silver Wind* by ISA Yachts
BOTTOM The luxurious Hotel Du Cap-Eden-Roc is set in secluded gardens on the Cote d'Azur with views of the Mediterranean coastline





Enjoy Michelin-starred cuisine at the outdoor restaurant at La Chèvre d'Or

The Cap Estel is the understated but no less glamorous alternative to the Eden Roc. “Ideally situated between St Jean Cap Ferrat and Monaco, tender to the private beach and lunch on the terrace for cuisine by Michelin-starred chef Patrick Raingeard,” recommends charter broker Molly Browne.

Monaco has a restaurant for every occasion. Located in the most exclusive hotel in the Côte d'Azur, Hôtel de Paris is home to several fine dining establishments, including Alain Ducasse's outstanding three-Michelin starred Le Louis XV. Also at the hotel is the recently renovated Le Grill, helmed by Franck Cerutti and Jean-Philippe Borro.

Bouchon is a perennial favourite amongst the expats who live there and those in the know, including Captain Toby Boone on board the 58m (190') *Illusion V*. “The terrace has a great atmosphere, the service is impeccable, and they serve traditional dishes like escargots and farçis.”

At the other end of the coastline, Alain Ducasse's acclaimed Rivea is at the heart of the St Tropez gastronomic scene. “Dishes draw on southern

European and North African influences,” says charter broker Pierre Hurel. “L'Escale, which is located right in the port of St Tropez, also has a menu featuring light Mediterranean cuisine. The service is great and the restaurant has a typical St Tropez atmosphere.”

Pampelonne Beach in St Tropez has been attracting the jet set for decades and exclusive beach clubs have been popping up along the shoreline since the mid 1970s. Le Club 55 is the most legendary establishment along Pampelonne Beach. “Although it is better known for its glamour and ambience than its restaurant scene, the menu of fresh fish and salads is ideal for a light lunch best enjoyed under the shade of the tamarisk trees on the terrace,” recommends charter broker Tina Montzka. Captain Istan Virag on board the 43.6m (143') *Silver Wind* also recommends Le Club 55, along with Nikki Beach, Tahiti and Nioulargo – all found along Pampelonne Beach. “Having spent the day in the sunshine, turn your attention to evening plans,” says Captain Virag. “Les Caves Du Roy is one of the most exclusive nightclubs in St Tropez and never fails to attract a glamorous crowd.”

Corsica and Sardinia

WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The French island of Corsica remains largely unspoilt, while neighbouring Sardinia provides some of the most popular cruising grounds in the Mediterranean. They may be different countries but due to their close proximity most charters will take in both islands during a cruise.

Corsica's west coast provides a stunning backdrop for any cruise, with deep bays and charming fishing villages. "The island has plenty of golden sand, with the Gulf of Valinco, on the southwest coast, boasting some of Corsica's prettiest beaches," says Captain Peter Leeming on board the 43m (141') *CD Two*. "Along the southern coastline you will also find the sheltered anchorage of Sant' Amanza. The narrow bay is deeply indented and lies just across the straits from Sardinia's Maddalena islands."

Captain Oscar Wollheim on board the 45m (148') motor yacht *Fathom* agrees. "Anchoring in Corsica can either be frustrating or immensely rewarding, depending on your timing," he says. "The east coast has very limited anchorages, and these are concentrated at the southern end of the island, but the west coast has many bays and beaches that are attractive, although always at risk from the mistral and the swell that it brings. However, when calm, these bays are ideal for watersports."

Captain Tom Filby on board the 44m (144'4) *Blue Vision* recommends visiting the Maddalena National Park and Porto Lungo for a peaceful anchorage. "A restaurant called La Scogliera lies in a small rocky bay. Once anchored the favoured means to get to the restaurant is by SeaBob to a small private beach, then a lazy lunch in the afternoon sun under white biminis on a terrace just above the water. Although in a busy area for cruising, it still feels remote and off the beaten path," says Captain Filby.

Stretching from Golfo Aranci to Baia Sardinia, the waters off Sardinia offer some of the best sailing conditions in the world. At the heart of the Costa Smeralda is the exclusive enclave of Porto Cervo. "The shoreline is where you will find designer boutiques and exclusive restaurants," says charter broker Vanessa Morlot. "The surrounding coves offer some of the nicest anchorages in the Mediterranean, with warm waters and white sandy beaches."

"Sardinia's best known beach is the sweeping Liscia Ruja, but if you want soft, bright white sand, ask your captain to steer your yacht to Pevero," recommends charter broker Vanessa Morlot. "The uninhabited island of Mortorio also has a beautiful beach."

TOP Stairway leading to the Neptune's Grotto in Capo Caccia cliffs, Sardinia, Italy **BOTTOM** The crystal clear sea waters off Bodri beach, Corsica



Amalfi Coast and the Aeolian Islands

TYRRHENIAN SEA

Boasting a rich cultural and artistic heritage, Italy's Amalfi Coast is too steep to support much in the way of modern development and therefore its beauty and tranquility remain relatively unspoilt. "The best views of this picturesque coastline are seen from the decks of your yacht, cruising from the bustling Bay of Naples to the volcanic island of Ischia, the 'island of wellbeing', and the glamorous neighbouring island of Capri," says Captain Simon Johnson on board the 63.5m (208') *Lioness V*. "The lesser-known Ponza is one of the most beautiful islands in the Mediterranean, and offers rocky grottos, hidden coves and authentic Italian fishing ports." Charter broker Eduardo Valfre agrees; "Ponza, and her neighbouring island Palamarola, boast stunning anchorages and great beaches."

The entire coastline is infused with Italy's great passion for fabulous cuisine, which ranges from Michelin-starred restaurants to regional dishes in the many cafés and stalls that line the main piazzas. Capri is celebrated for its Neapolitan culinary scene. "Join the A-list crowd on the terrace of Qvisi at the Grand Hotel Quisisana for an aperitif before dining at the hotel's fashionable RendezVous restaurant," recommends charter broker Eduardo Valfre. "In Anicapri, I highly recommend the pizzeria Materita and Il Riccio Restaurant and Beach Club at the Capri Palace."

Back on the mainland cruise past the many Renaissance palaces and Roman remains perched along the coastline between the towns of Ravello, Sorrento and Amalfi. Step ashore to the fishing village-turned-tourist hotspot Positano for a drink on the terrace at La Sponda. You will also find Villa Treville in Positano. "Accessible only by boat, last summer saw the hotel revive the Treville Beach Club in Laurito Bay," says Captain David McMorrow on board the 64.5m (211'7) motor yacht *Silver Angel*. "Take the tender ashore for sunset or a nightcap set to music by live bands or resident DJ's."

IMAGE The terrace of Qvisi at the Grand Hotel Quisisana

A veritable bohemian Mediterranean paradise, the archipelago of seven islands – Stromboli, Panarea, Salina, Lipari, Vulcano, Filicudi and Alicudi – have escaped mass development. Reached only by ferry or yacht, the islands are known for their scenic shores and glittering nightlife. "The active volcanic island of Stromboli has many bays and inlets that are perfect for water sports," recommends Captain Simon Johnson. "Panarea is the place to head for both nightlife and restaurants ashore. There is an anchorage on the north side of the island which I can highly recommend," he says. "There is nothing quite like lying stern-to the rocks; it's as though you have your own private dock."

Captain Julian Sincock on board the 47m (155') motor yacht *Princess AVK* also recommends the island of Panarea. "It is great to drop anchor and spend the day bathing in the perfect waters before stepping ashore to what I consider to be the best restaurant in the archipelago, Da Pina," he says. "Here you will also find the beautiful hotel Raya, where you can enjoy an aperitif watching the sunset over the neighbouring island of Stromboli."

What's not to love about the Western Mediterranean. Whatever you want to do on your charter, these cruising grounds provide the perfect mix of class and charm.





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QUISISANA

QUISISANA