



As social venues go, the world's leading yacht clubs have the upper hand – particularly during regattas

The clubs rule



**Golden Gate
Yacht Club**
San Francisco, US

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The club of the moment is the Golden Gate Yacht Club (GGYC) – the current holder of the America's Cup and as such the official host of the 2013 yacht race.

Founded in 1939 on a barge located in the San Francisco Marina, the original clubhouse was

destroyed in the Loma Prieta Quake in 1989 but its enthusiastic and dedicated club members rebuilt what is today one of the most famous yacht clubs in the world. Its location on the edge of the San Francisco Bay affords dazzling views over the water, the Golden Gate Bridge and the infamous Alcatraz. More importantly, it provides access to some of

—
ITS LOCATION ON
THE EDGE OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO
BAY AFFORDS
DAZZLING VIEWS
OVER THE WATER

—
By Miriam Cain

the most spectacular sailing waters in the world. Members – both sail and power enthusiasts – enjoy a busy schedule of racing and social events throughout the year. www.ggyc.com

Best known for
Its spectacular location overlooking many of the city's most iconic sights



The Royal Yacht Squadron Isle of Wight, UK

Not quite the world's oldest yacht club, but the most famous of the historic ones, the Royal Yacht Squadron (RYS) was established in 1815 and was set up as a local club by members with an interest in yachting. Its royal association came five years later when Prince Regent, who was a member, became George IV and it was renamed the Royal Yacht Squadron.

The club has attracted famous members, the likes of Nelson's captain at Trafalgar Admiral

Sir Thomas Hardy, securing its reputation as one of the most influential yachting establishments. It was the RYS's commodore who challenged the New York Yacht Club and the yacht America to a round-the-island race in 1851 – now the famous America's Cup (see NYYC, right). Today the club hosts a number of regattas, the most famous of which is Cowes Week. www.rys.org.uk

Best known for
Its incredible history that stretches back to 1815. It also initiated the rule that requires yachts to pass each other on the starboard side

New York Yacht Club New York, US

The New York Yacht Club (NYYC) has more than 3,000 members and two clubhouses: one in Manhattan and the other in Harbour Court, Newport, RI. The club was established in 1844 by John Cox Stevens. He was the owner of the schooner America, with which he challenged a fleet of British yachts in 1851 in what became the America's Cup race. Between 1851 and 1983 the club successfully defended the cup 25 times.

From transatlantic victories to its famous 'cruises', the club has

been a founder of many of yachting's great firsts. Since losing the cup to Australia in 1983, the club has welcomed younger sailors to its Manhattan clubhouse and Harbour Court. The former is a jacket-and-tie establishment and the latter provides members with access to the ideal sailing conditions promised by the deep waters around Rhode Island. www.nyyc.org

Best known for
Hosting the America's Cup for 132 years, and the power of the burgee – a flag recognised the world over that only members can fly

— THE ROYAL YACHT SQUADRON WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1815 AS A LOCAL YACHT CLUB. ITS ROYAL ASSOCIATION CAME FIVE YEARS LATER



Yacht Club de Monaco *Monaco*

Founded in 1953 by Prince Rainier III of Monaco, the Yacht Club de Monaco was created from the old Société des Régates. Its aim was to promote yachting within the principality and judging by the yachts that adorn Monaco's Port Hercule today, it succeeded.

Twinned with a number of clubs, including the aforementioned YCCS, the club's major focus is racing, but the social scene is not far behind. This is a club with such an exclusive members'

list that although it is the place to be seen, the members remain discreetly tucked away. Whether this is all about to change is yet to be seen as its new transatlantic-liner themed clubhouse (pictured top) opens in 2014. The venue, on the opposite side of the port to the club's current location, will provide a fantastic platform overlooking the principality and the yachts and is sure to appeal to a new set of yachting socialites. www.yacht-club-monaco.mc

Best known for
Its extremely exclusive members' list

Yacht Club Costa Smeralda *Sardinia, Italy*

Founded in 1967 by HH the Aga Khan, the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda (YCCS) is one of the leading yacht clubs in the Mediterranean. It is located in Sardinia's Porto Cervo and the waters surrounding the club provide ideal conditions for sailing regattas – as such the club hosts many high-profile events, including the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, the Audi Sardinia Cup, the Rolex Swan Cup and World and European championships for top one-design fleets.

The club is at the forefront of powerboat racing and hosts the Offshore Grand Prix for powerboats. Recent years have seen the addition of superyacht events such as the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta, the Perini Navi Cup and Dubois Cup.

Aside from its racing calendar, the YCCS has an impressive social scene and the clubhouse buzzes with high-profile members throughout the summer. www.yccs.it

Best known for
Its compelling social scene and world-famous regattas