



RACE ACTION

The world of superyacht racing is heating up for the America's Cup final in 2013. *Elite Traveler Superyachts* presents a guide to the premier big yacht regattas taking place around the world in the lead up to the largest yachting event in history. BY MIRIAM CAIN



NIGHTLIFE AT THE LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA

Almost every yacht race began as a challenge. From matches between two yachts that on impulse sparked up a race, to the spectacular world-wide events that they are today, regattas have captured the attention of not just owners, their captains and crew, but of yachtsmen and dedicated racing fans. The yachts themselves are awe-inspiring, but add to this the power and performance of the vessels, the passion and skill of the crews and the festival-like atmosphere that surrounds a racing event both on the water and on the quayside, and it is understandable why high-profile regattas are being held along almost every coastline of note. Lovers of racing, fans of classic yachts and advocates of great fun raise sails and toasts from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean to the South Pacific year-round. Here's to the races.

MILLENNIUM CUP, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, FEBRUARY 14 TO 17, 2013

Organized by the New Zealand Marine Industry, the NZ Millennium Cup began in its namesake country during the 2000 America's Cup. The Millennium Cup, held in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf off Auckland, is now an annual fixture and has become the main regatta for the South Pacific. It gathers superyachts of 79 feet and above to sail in a showcase of the country's finest marine technologies competing in a variety of harbor and passage races. It also hosts a number of social events throughout the cup, with superyacht owners, crews and sponsors enjoying cocktails and a gala dinner.

CARIBBEAN SUPERYACHT REGATTA & RENDEZVOUS, VIRGIN GORDA, BVI, MARCH 20 TO 23, 2013

A sister event to the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta, the third annual Caribbean Superyacht Regatta & Rendezvous will bring together sailing and motor yacht owners to race in the waters surrounding the British Virgin Island of Virgin Gorda. Spread across three days, the occasion will follow a similar format to the Loro Piana regatta with yacht races followed by motor yacht sails. The regatta is hosted by the new **Yacht Club Costa Smeralda Virgin Gorda** marina in North Sound and is accompanied by numerous social events including Caribbean barbecues, treasure hunts, lunches, dinners and several parties.

ST. BARTHS BUCKET, ST. BARTHS, MARCH 28 TO 31, 2013

NEWPORT BUCKET, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, AUGUST 23 TO 25, 2013

The least serious regatta, the Buckets' origin says it all. In 1986, three captains argued over which yacht was the fastest and which crew most skilled. The only way to resolve the issue was to race, and thus seven yachts set forth to race around Nantucket Sound. Since then, the Nantucket Bucket has flourished into a popular regatta. Due to its popularity, the Bucket was taken to St. Barths in 1995, and in 2001 the Nantucket venue changed to nearby Newport. The Buckets have become an annual celebration for owners and their crew looking for an admirable excuse for three days of fine-spirited competition, glorious sailing and fun.

LES VOILES DE ST. BARTH, ST. BARTHS, CARIBBEAN, APRIL 8 TO 13, 2013

The fourth edition of Les Voiles de St. Barth will take place in April in the waters surrounding the idyllic Caribbean island of St. Barths. The success of previous years has firmly established the regatta on the Caribbean sailing calendar, attracting just under 50 yachts in its second year, participating across five classes of racing, including maxi yachts, spinnaker and non-spinnaker racing, classic yachts and multihulls racing. The competition is spread over a week, with a day's break in the middle for relaxation and a chance to recuperate from the sailing and the busy social scene.

ANTIGUA CLASSIC YACHT REGATTA, ANTIGUA, APRIL 18 TO 23, 2013

Not quite the oldest regatta around but with its fleet of spectacular classic sailing yachts, the Antigua Classic Regatta has become a classic in its own right. The first formal regatta of Antigua Sailing Week took place in 1967 at the end of a successful charter season in the Caribbean. A fleet of time-honored superyachts raced to Guadeloupe, and in the years that followed the tradition continued. In 1988, the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta became a firm fixture on the yachting calendar. Since then it has become one of the most prestigious events with over 60 yachts competing in races off the south coast of the island of Antigua. The regatta embraces a mix of sailing yachts, from genuine classics to modern marvels built in the traditional spirit. The aim of the Spirit of Tradition Class is to encourage the increase of modern classics in order to keep the spark of craftsmanship alive. The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is the first in a series of regattas that form the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge.

PANERAI CLASSIC YACHTS CHALLENGE, NUMEROUS LOCATIONS, MID-APRIL TO SEPTEMBER, 2013

Several regattas taking place from mid-April through the end of September make up the Challenge, which has become the leading international regatta circuit reserved for classic and vintage yachts. The boats are divided into two main classes for racing: Vintage yachts include those that are built of wood or metal and were launched prior to the end of 1949, and classic yachts are those built of wood or metal and launched before the end of 1975.

Marblehead Corinthian Classic Yacht Regatta, August 2013

Nantucket Opera House Cup, August 2013

Mahon, IX Copa del Rey de Barcos de Epoca, August 2013

Newport Museum of Yachting Classic Yacht Regatta, August 2013

Vele d'Epoca di Imperia, September 2013

Cannes Régates Royales, September 2013

AMERICA'S CUP WORLD SERIES

Of course, the most famous event of them all is the America's Cup. With a pedigree like no other in the world of yacht racing, it is believed to be the oldest trophy in sport and the hardest to be won. Now in its 34th series, the trophy lies with BMW Oracle Racing, who in February 2010 brought the America's Cup back to America by defeating Swiss defender Team Alinghi with a multihull yacht. San Francisco Bay will play host to the America's Cup Finals, the Louis Vuitton Cup and America's Cup Challenger Series in 2013, marking the first time the America's Cup has been hosted in the United States since 1995. The event, a favorite of racing enthusiasts worldwide, has already drawn thousands to view the first stage of the AC World Series, which allows the teams and their crews to prepare for the Louis Vuitton Cup, the America's Cup Challenger Series and the America's Cup Finals. Cup races are held at top venues around the world and kicked off with the first race in Portugal in early August and finished in Italy in May 2013. The challenger will have to then win the Louis Vuitton Cup, held in



PANERAI CLASSIC YACHTS CHALLENGE



AMERICA'S CUP



More than 500 yachts are involved in the four demanding circuits that include the aforementioned Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta in April; the Mediterranean Circuit, which starts with Les Voiles d'Antibes in June and finishes with the Cannes Régates Royales in September; the Cowes Panerai British Classic Week in July; and the North American Circuit in August and September. The popularity of the Challenge confirms the extraordinary interest surrounding regattas reserved for vintage boats.

Les Voiles d'Antibes, May 2013

Argentario Sailing Week, June 2013

Panerai British Classic Week, July 2013

the summer of 2013, to earn the right to race the defender in September in San Francisco Bay.

The buildup to the main event has already been vast and the Louis Vuitton Acts will provide dramatic viewing for thousands who flock to San Francisco to witness the head-to-head racing among yachts that boast some of the finest sail technology, engineering and design to ever be seen.

AC World Series, Venice, Italy, April 16 to 21, 2013

AC World Series, Naples, Italy, May 14 to 19, 2013

Louis Vuitton Cup, San Francisco, July 4 to September 1, 2013

America's Cup Finals, San Francisco, September 7 to 22, 2013

LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA, SARDINIA, ITALY, JUNE 4 TO 8, 2013

The Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta will head into its sixth year in 2013. Hosted by the **Yacht Club Costa Smeralda** and sponsored by **Loro Piana**, the regatta is held in June in the waters off Sardinia's Costa Smeralda. The event is held over five days, with four days of racing. New categories were added to the racing last year, including performance sailing yachts and a cruising division. The races are followed with a busy social schedule as yacht owners and their crew are treated to a whirlwind of events, including a beach party and gala dinner.

SUPERYACHT CUP, MALLORCA, SPAIN, JUNE 19 TO 22, 2013

The Superyacht Cup has been running for a number of years in different destinations around the world, including Palma and Antigua. 2012 was a special year for the Superyacht Cup with two regattas: The 16th Palma event in June and a special event in Cowes in the United Kingdom in July, which ran prior to the London Olympics. The latter event, hosted in association with the Royal Yacht Squadron, was based around the Isle of Wight in the Solent on a course that was made famous with the first America's Cup race in 1851. The Superyacht Cup is a fun yet competitive regatta for superyachts of 79 feet and above. The racing adopts a unique pursuit-style format with the slow boats starting ahead of the faster boats (mainly for safety reasons) and is based on an elapsed time and points system calculated over three days, with a low points wins system.



LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA

LES VOILES DE ST. TROPEZ, FRANCE, SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 7, 2012

The perfect backdrop for a classic sailing yacht regatta, St. Tropez has been hosting Les Voiles de St. Tropez for 30 years. Originally known as La Nioulargue, the annual rendezvous of beautiful, traditional and modern sailing yachts is held in the bay of St. Tropez each autumn. The event was launched in 1981



SUPERYACHT CUP



AUDI HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK



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AUDI HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK, HAMILTON ISLAND, AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 17 TO 25, 2013

The annual Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, Australia's largest offshore regatta, is a must-attend event for sailing and motor superyachts in the Antipodes in late August. Hosted by **Hamilton Island**, a luxury resort lying on the Great Barrier Reef, the event, which has been running for 29 years, is spread over a week and involves every style of racing from keelboat—it is the country's premier keelboat competition—to sports boats, One Design, performance racing as well as superyacht sailing and motor yacht racing categories. Along with the competitions come the inevitable social programs, from black-tie dinners and wine tastings to beach parties galore.

when an owner and skipper of two classic yachts raced each other from the foot of the village of St. Tropez around the Nioulargo to arrive opposite **Club 55** on Pampelonne beach. Today it has become an exciting regatta for owners to enjoy the power and performance of over 300 sailing yachts in every size and shape racing across seven performance classes.

There are several other regattas worth a mention, including designer- and builder-specific events created exclusively for owners of specific brands or yacht designs. These include The Dubois Cup, which is hosted for Dubois-designed yachts in the waters around Sardinia, Italy; the Perini Navi Cup, which is exclusively for the Perini Navi fleet; and the Nespresso Cup, a regatta designed for the Wally Yachts fleet.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CARLO BORLENGHI,
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(LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA)