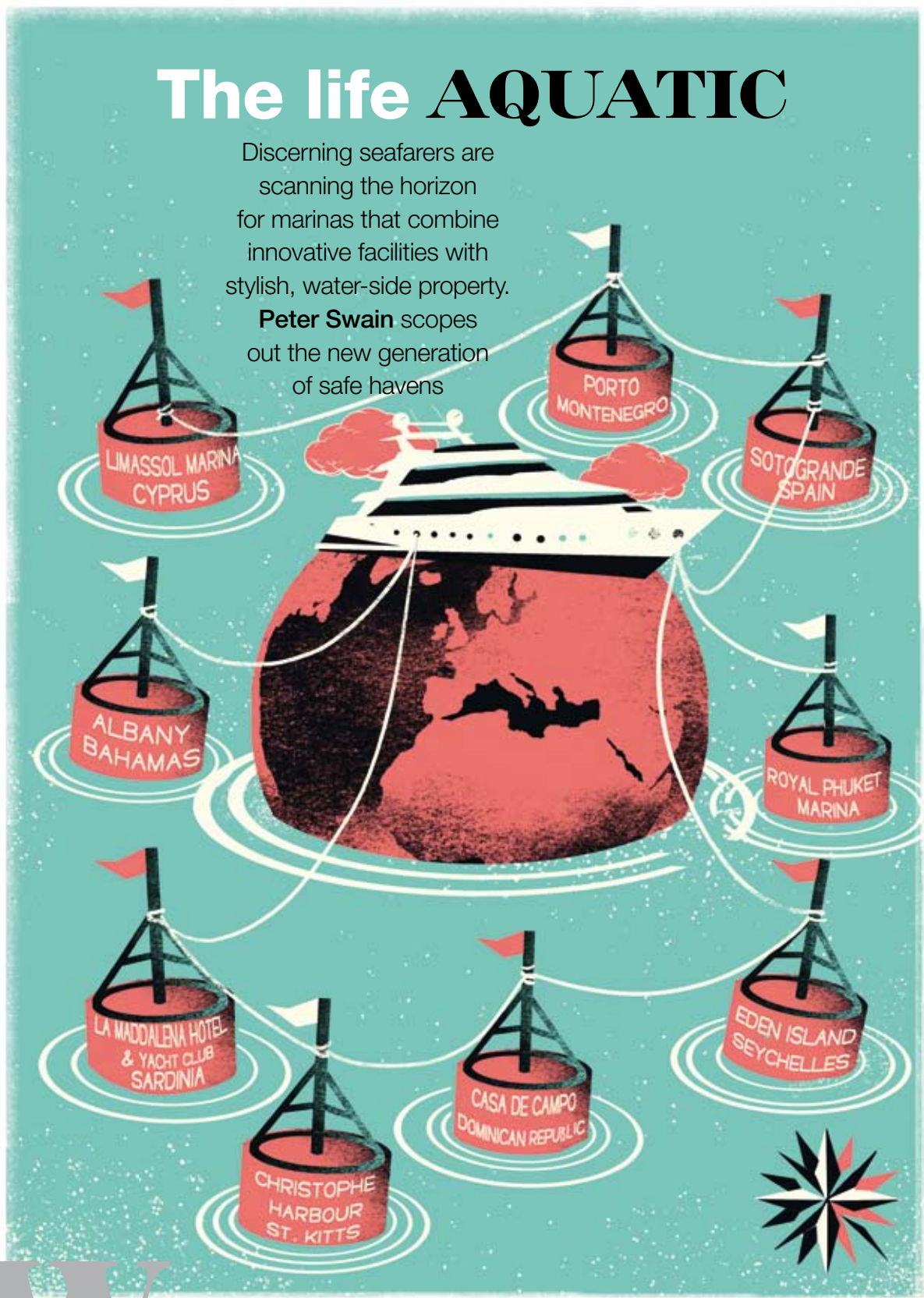


# The life AQUATIC

Discerning seafarers are scanning the horizon for marinas that combine innovative facilities with stylish, water-side property.

**Peter Swain** scopes out the new generation of safe havens



With the global fleet of 30-metre-plus superyachts currently standing at 3,986, according to Superyacht Intelligence, and 200 or so svelte new mistresses of the sea being launched every year, speed of ship construction has far outstripped the supply of suitably lavish berths. To satisfy this new demand, and because oceanside living is itself increasingly à la mode, there is a paradigm shift towards a new generation of integrated marinas in which maritime explorers and land-lubbers alike can not only enjoy luxury leisure activities but also reside. ➤



A generation ago, many Mediterranean and Caribbean marinas were glorified boat parks. George Nicholson, scion of Camper and Nicholson International, believes the new trend is towards altogether more ambitious establishments. "There is no doubt in my mind that marinas for all sizes of yacht now need to be destinations in their own right, rather than just somewhere to dock the boat." And that includes a good choice of well-appointed real estate for first, second or even tertiary homes.

**Limassol Marina** in Cyprus is an archetypal example of the new genre of exclusive Mediterranean waterfront development jostling for the spotlight. Italian and French Riviera marinas have been full for some time, and few have space available for superyachts anyway, so this new government-backed €350m project, with more than 600 berths ranging in size from 10 to 50 metres, is making quite a splash. As well as state-of-the-



**SOTOGRADE** (above) is the quintessential western Mediterranean leisure and sporting destination. [sotogrande.com](http://sotogrande.com)

**PORTO MONTENEGRO** (centre) is being transformed from naval base into voguish marina. [portomontenegro.com](http://portomontenegro.com)

**PHUKET** (bottom left) Royal connections ensure striking design paired with opulent facilities. [royalphuketmarina.com](http://royalphuketmarina.com)



art port and communications facilities, bars, shops and eateries, all integrating seamlessly with the bustling Old Town, it will have 274 elegant apartments and villas over and around the water, priced from about €500,000 to €10 million, of which the Peninsular and Island Villas, with private berths at the foot of the garden, are the crème de la crème. The first yachts should be tying up in 2012.

As the Adriatic becomes an increasingly modish cruising destination, **Porto Montenegro** in the former Austro-Hungarian naval base of Tivat is set to alchemize into the biggest marina village and yacht-home port in the region. Catering to the most discriminating owners and their crews, the port will have 630 berths, of which 130 can host vessels longer than 24 metres, dockside facilities that once handled warships, plus market square bars, restaurants and boutique hotels. With marina-side residences currently among the best-performing real estate assets worldwide, the current offering of Ozana apartments is attracting considerable interest. New owners can rent berths at a 75% discount, so, for example, with the €1,870,000 penthouse comes the opportunity to take a 50-metre slip at the discounted rate of €45,927 for three years.

Sailing west, **Sotogrande**, the luxe marina, hotel, golf, polo, and real estate ➤





**CHRISTOPHE HARBOUR (top)**  
Cutting through a sand bar has created a stunning natural deepwater basin in St Kitts. [christopheharbour.com](http://christopheharbour.com)

**CASA DE CAMPO (middle)**  
The architecture acknowledges a Caribbean heritage, with American-style luxe amenities. [casadecampo.com/do](http://casadecampo.com/do)

**EDEN ISLAND**  
Owners of a slice of paradise qualify for Seychelles residency. [edenisland.sc](http://edenisland.sc)

## AFTER THE MED, THE CARIBBEAN IS THE SUPERYACHT SANCTUARY OF CHOICE

enclave along the coast from Marbella, was in the vanguard of this whole movement. The Real Club de Golf, Valderrama and the many exquisite haciendas surrounding them actually predate the 800-berth marina, which lays claim to being the finest in the Western Mediterranean. Spain's richest man, Amancio Ortega, of Zara fame, is behind the current hot waterfront property proposition, Ribera del Marlin. David Vaughan of property agents Savills underlines the association between new berths and the bespoke apartments, priced from €400,000 to €1.2 million: "About 30% of our sales so far have been to yacht-owners, who have the option to buy 15 or 25m berths on an advantageous 50-year maritime lease." With an effervescent harbour-side ambience, the 2,000ha Sotogrande is precisely the sort of marina destination others are trying to emulate.

Across in Sardinia, **La Maddalena Hotel & Yacht Club** is a rather smaller but no less chic enterprise, having just hosted this summer's Louis Vuitton

Trophy, part of the über-prestigious America's Cup. Renowned for its beaches, the tiny island of La Maddalena at the northern extreme of Sardinia is close to the sybaritic delights of the Costa Smeralda. The 97-suite hotel, created by Studio Stefano Boeri Architetti with design input from Zaha Hadid and Sardinian stylist Antonio Marras, overlooks Porto Arsenale, which will eventually have berths for 600 yachts, including four slips for 100m leviathans. Ideal as *pied-à-terres*, the 91 *soignée* Residence apartments about to be launched will share the hotel's exemplary service.

After the Mediterranean, where 60% of the larger pleasure vessels are based, the Caribbean is the superyacht sanctuary of choice, with a number of ambitious new marina developments on the slipway. Raising the bar on New Providence in the Bahamas, **Albany** is the billion-dollar brainchild of British entrepreneur Joe Lewis, with partners Ernie Els and Tiger Woods. When the 71 slips ranging in size from 15 to 73 metres are complete, there is every chance the yacht *Privacy*, belonging to the world's most famous golfer, will make an appearance. The 235ha gated community, with championship golf course, boutique hotel, equestrian centre and spa, will eventually have 350 homes, of which the most aesthetically arresting are being built dockside. The 100 Marina Residences, priced from \$4 million to \$40 million and designed by some of the world's foremost architects, will range from two-bedroom units to five-bedroom penthouses, with both proximity to Nassau airport and the benign Bahamas



**ALBANY** exemplifies colonial grandeur as well as golf, gastronomic and yachting excellence. [albanybahamas.com](http://albanybahamas.com)

tax regime as definite bonuses.

St Kitts in the Eastern Caribbean has a gentler pace of life altogether and does not currently feature largely on the yachting map, but the extraordinarily ambitious **Christophe Harbour** is about to change all that. Buddy Darby, the man behind Kiawah Island in South Carolina, has bought the southeast peninsula of the island and is developing some dazzling real estate in and around several sandy bays, the Tom Fazio-designed hilltop golf course and the 120ha harbour where the first superyachts to use the 300 slips up to 30 metres in length should be docking in time for the 2011 season. Purchasers can automatically apply for St Kitts citizenship with its inherent tax advantages, but eagle-eyed investors are really being attracted by the chance to be in at the beginning of one of the Caribbean hotspots in coming years.

Already well established, the sumptuous **Casa de Campo** resort in the Dominican Republic has just unveiled a \$40 million hotel refurbishment next to its 13 tennis courts, equestrian centre, polo fields, hotel, many restaurants, and three exquisite Pete Dye golf courses. Beside the pristine private beach, the fully equipped 314-slip marina takes yachts up to 76 metres – all conveniently close to Romana International Airport, with flight time to Europe about 9.5 hours, and Miami, 90 minutes. Slip packages are being offered to buyers of villas priced between \$595,000 and \$15 million, and apartments from \$480,000.

The Asia Pacific region is also witnessing a flowering of oceanside creativity. Absurdly close to paradise,



**LA MADDALENA**, a divine Sardinian location with lashings of Italian design flair. [lamaddalena.hyc.com](http://lamaddalena.hyc.com)

## THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION IS ALSO WITNESSING A FLOWERING OF OCEANSIDE CREATIVITY

the sumptuously sexy **Eden Island** in the Seychelles is connected to Mahé by a bridge, ensuring commodious access to the airport while maintaining an aura of discrete seclusion. With 100m yachts welcome, the private residential marina development is promoting oceanfront villas, each with its own mooring, priced from €1.1 million, built along 16 hectares of private waterways connecting every owner to the open sea. The design ethic is traditional, deep-verandahed plantation manor house, with private beaches, lush gardens, fine dining and a relaxed clubhouse bar completing the exotic picture.

Further east, *The Man with the Golden Gun* was shot in Thailand's Phang Nga Bay, and budding James Bonds have a licence to thrill at the nearby **Royal Phuket Marina**, the country's premier yachting destination. The secret agent and his coterie will be drawn to the Aquaminium penthouse, which has a private berth with retractable door enabling the owner to drive his luxury craft right into his own condo, close the door and disembark straight into his private spa. The Grand Villa connects through perfumed gardens to a 25m infinity swimming pool, Jacuzzi, outdoor *salas* and 70m superyacht berth. Combined with a Fisherman's Wharf-style waterfront promenade of restaurants and cafés, up-market boutiques, swimming pools, floodlit tennis courts and health clubs, this is a perfect exemplar of the new generation of integrated marina destinations now being enjoyed by the cosmopolitan seagoing elite worldwide. ●

**LIMASSOL** waterfront development is designed for "living on the sea". [limassolmarina.com](http://limassolmarina.com)

