



*A moveable*  
**FEAST**

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Food is the spice of life, and on a yacht the chef is an essential ingredient, creating dishes that elevate the guest experience, from rustic beach barbecues to molecular gastronomy.









## CULINARY DELIGHTS

A network of professional, highly skilled, trained chefs sits at the heart of yachting's palate-blowing cuisine. Their Michelin-level food is seasoned with experience and augmented through travel, garnering inspiration from the myriad waters where charter yachts drop anchor.

"The food that we serve is hugely diverse," says Andrew Reagen, chef aboard 76M (247') **WHEELS** (for Charter, see pg. 108).

"All our charter guests are from varying cultures with different dietary requirements, and I relish the challenge."

Classically trained in modern French cuisine, Reagen spent six years in the Michelin-starred kitchen of British Relais & Châteaux hotel, Chewton Glen, before moving into yachting 17 years ago. He works on rotation, sharing the role with fellow Michelin-trained chef Lenny and two rotational sous chefs. Together, they whip up a gourmet storm in their sociable galley, where long, steam-filled hours give way to lively chatter and the scent of irresistible dishes.

In 2022, **WHEELS** spent the summer season cruising Greece, Türkiye, Croatia and Montenegro. The previous year the yacht sailed around France and Italy. In every port and hidden bay, taste-filled opportunities abound.

"There are fantastic fresh produce markets in the south of France," says Reagen. "Nice is amazing, but Cannes is my favourite." Italy's Sorrento and Amalfi Coast also prove popular for morning excursions with guests. "There's always a little market in Corsica, where the tomatoes taste fantastic, and the fresh fish is incredible."

It's a similar scenario aboard 38M (123') **UNEXPECTED** (for Charter, see pg. 165), which cruises the Mediterranean in summer. "We are French, so food is important to us," explains one charter guest.

"The food aboard **UNEXPECTED** was always fresh as the chef was shopping every day."

Joshua Lewis, chef aboard 85M (278') **VICTORIOUS** (for Charter, see pg. 102) displays his haul of homegrown market produce on the upper deck table for guests to see before taking it to the galley. "You can almost taste the area where it grows, it becomes an encompassing part of the meal itself," he says.

Sourcing locally grown/caught ingredients helps to capture the essence of a location, but it's the imaginative way in which that produce is used that counts. When cruising Türkiye's waters in the summer, **VICTORIOUS** guests dined on baby lamb cooked over smoking olive branches on an island, with the yacht moored nearby. "We paired it with freshly baked breads and wild capers foraged on the island," says Lewis.

Attuning recipes to the surrounding setting or country is key. When in Italy, Reagen prepares chicken with lemons, tomatoes and olives, or veal scallopini, a popular classic dish served with fresh Caprese salad (sliced fresh mozzarella, tomatoes and sweet basil). He makes his own pasta, such as truffle gnocchi or lobster ravioli, cracking the claws and kneading the dough by hand. When in Greece, he reaches for the olives and extra virgin olive oil. "We make dolmas (stuffed vine leaves) and cook a lot of lamb, often marinating it overnight. We bake our own pan breads and fresh pitta, and whip up creamy tzatziki for dipping," he enthuses.

Adept at covering all sections in the galley, from fish and meat to pastry and dessert, yacht chefs are proficient in a range of techniques. "I collect the fruit of all my experiences, the techniques I have learned to create original dishes that have my own unique mark," says Alessandro Benacquista, chef aboard 71M (231') **FORCE BLUE**



Opening page, Seafood platter, WHEELS, for Charter, pg. 110; Previous page, The Silverlining dining table and detail, ARTEFACT; Plating up for service; This page, clockwise, Salad reimagined and lunch, ODYSSEA, for Charter, pg. 140; Chef Benacquista and dishes fresh from the galley, FORCE BLUE, for Charter, pg. 112





(for Charter, see pg. 112). “Being a chef is a bit like being an artist. To be motivated to always try different things.”

Guests are dazzled by the smoke-filled surprise of molecular gastronomy one day, and the simplicity of the archetypal beach barbecue the next.

“In the Caribbean, we barbecue every day,” says Reagen. “There’s a deserted sandbank in The Bahamas where the crew rake the **WHEELS** logo into the sand and the guests arrive to find me barbecuing a sizzling steak or lobster on the beach. It’s brilliant.”

Beach barbecues combine the rustic allure of a deserted island with the epicurean highs of superyacht life. **WHEELS**’ set up incorporates two areas — one for lounging, one for dining — with the table dressed just as it would be aboard the yacht. Bottles of rosé and bottomless jugs of rum punch and salty margarita cocktails flow, with dessert adding the final flourish. “One of the deck crew will come flying in on a jet-ski with a package of ice cream brought over from the yacht. We flambé Crêpes Suzette, and the guests are wowed by the fact they’re sat in the middle of nowhere eating it with ice cream,” says Reagen.

In warm climates, light buffet lunches are often favoured, such as feta-packed Greek salads, homemade spanakotiroпита (spinach and cheese pie), and the warm, sticky joy of freshly baked baklava; its butter, pistachio and honey fragrance saturating the galley. In contrast, formal evening occasions are an opportunity for chefs to be more experimental, diving into well-thumbed cookbooks that pull on family recipes.

“We recently welcomed a family of Iranian Americans who had some dishes that they wanted me to cook,” says Lewis. “I haven’t been to Iran, but I researched ideas and have Persian friends who I got in touch with, and they sent me recipes. At the end of the charter, the grandmother — the matriarch — kissed me on the cheek and said, “This is the best tahdig that I’ve ever had! For me, that’s what it’s all about.”

The chefs’ ability to personalise a menu to guests’ palates is what stood out for one charter guest aboard 74M (242’) **ANDREA** (for Charter, pg. 110): “The chef was amazing, he had an enormous range and as an American, he cooked very much how we are used to.”

Likewise, guests aboard 28M (91’) **ULTIMATE LADY** (for Charter, see pg. 182) proclaim chef Artur’s creations to be the “best food we ever had on land or sea!”

Themed evenings that span the globe also score highly, with **VICTORIOUS** taking in the exotic riches of Georgia one night,







and a Balinese evening the next, decorated with tropical flowers and food served on banana leaves.

“Asian food is a genre in high demand,” says Reagen, who spent two months in the mayhem of Hong Kong kitchens learning how to roll sushi rice in nori and cook Szechuan style. “I’m comfortable with Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Indian cuisine, and we’ve had some great Indian chefs who have come aboard for a few days teaching us everything from scratch.”

Lewis, too, has bolstered his knowledge through travel, ticking Korea, Japan and southeast Asia off his list. Their expertise is supported by the provisioning lengths that yachts go to, to satisfy the whims and tastebuds of charter guests. A penchant for Japanese Kobe fillets and Kagoshima beef or the best Beluga caviar chefs can get their hands on is typically fulfilled within 24 to 36 hours, even when at anchor in the Maldives.

“The provisioning company that we use when in The Bahamas has its own DC-10 aircraft that it flies to the Exumas from Miami with our order,” says Reagen. “They source fresh produce from small farms, which means we can guarantee the quality of our ingredients, even when anchored remotely.”

One **WHEELS** charter went a step further, when a day of fishing saw a guest reel in a large tuna. “I used the fish four ways, making sushi, sashimi, tuna tartare and then we smoked it too, using our smoker in the galley,” smiles Reagen. “I showed the guests how to fillet the fish as well, which they loved.”

For Lewis, the importance of food has always been about bringing people together. He’s only been in yachting for two years, though has worked as a private chef for over 12 years in Switzerland, St Tropez and Moscow, cutting his teeth under renowned British chef Rick Stein. Aboard **VICTORIOUS**, he works alongside a sous chef and crew chef. It’s a busy galley, where zesty flavours linger in the air, day and night.

“I grew up with many people that inspired me in different ways,” he says. “My mother is an incredible pastry chef. As a child, I knew an elderly gentleman who taught me how to grow vegetables and my grandfather showed me how to take care of livestock. From a really young age I was baking bread with my mother every day.”

His culinary foundation translates to the gourmet experience aboard **VICTORIOUS**, with guests encouraged to get involved as much as they want. “We have guests who are absolute foodies, and they really want to be in control of the menu, and others who just want to relax. They give us their preference sheet and trust us to deliver.”

Many guests relish interaction with the galley, fascinated by the chefs’ ability to pivot between informal buffets and fine dining. On Asian themed evenings, Reagen takes the ceramic Japanese Konro grill to the sundeck to cook in front of guests. Using Binchotan charcoal, which is pure and burns without smoke, he grills spice-rubbed meat at 600 degrees Celsius (1,110 degrees Fahrenheit), lacing the night sky with zingy aromas. On other nights, he serves fresh pasta at the dining table or prepares whole sea bass cured in rock salt.



Children as young as six are invited into **WHEELS'** galley, given a chef's jacket, hat and apron, and shown how to make pizza, bake cookies or prepare sushi.

"We make the pizza dough, and they have fun throwing it around the galley, coating the floor in flour," smiles Reagen. "Sometimes the parents will join in the cooking demos. We run an open galley, with a comfy chair and pull-down table, and many guests like to sit with a glass of wine and chat."

Plating the food is the galley's domain but front of house presentation, from tablescaping to themed evenings, falls to the interior crew. "The crew worked tirelessly to make sure we were always happy. They define customer satisfaction, taking it to another level," says a charter guest of 35M (113') **OKSANCHIK** (for Charter, see pg. 170). "The fresh local food prepared by the chef was amazing, as was the impeccable service by the two stews."

Aboard **WHEELS**, themed evenings span everything, from Hawaiian to Moroccan. "We always gauge the guests' preferences beforehand to make sure we're setting an environment that they will enjoy," says Liza Ferreira, chief stewardess. The Great Gatsby proves the most popular theme, with cocktails created by the boat's onboard mixologist that Jay Gatsby himself would covet. "We have costumes delivered to the guests' cabins prior to dinner, and we always serve a cocktail of the day, anything from a Bellini to our Hot Wheels signature," says Ferreira.

Oenophiles are invited to dip into the expanding wine cellar, which is well-stocked with French varieties, not to mention 15 different selections of Champagne. For guests keen to pair their meals with a wine flight, Ferreira consults with Reagen to curate a wine menu that complements the culinary delights.

"I like to use fresh herbs in my dishes because they enhance the taste and work in synergy with cocktails," says Benacquista. "It creates a unique and balanced flavour on the palate."

"You need vibrancy aboard a yacht," says Lewis. "I love everything about food, including the learning process, and I think that's what it takes to make a really great chef; just the capacity to learn and to continue to want to learn."

Dining aboard a superyacht is an unparalleled experience, where the food takes a starring role. When prepared by chefs whose enthusiasm for cooking is palpable, the benchmark is set even higher.

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*To find out more about experiencing the yachts referenced above, see **Yachts for Charter**, pg. 92 and **Yachts for Sale**, pg. 188.*

*Ready to indulge in this experience?  
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*Above, from left, Beach BBQ, FORMOSA, for Charter, pg. 117; Plating up for service; Delicious desserts, FORCE BLUE, for Charter, pg. 112*









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# Recipes from the galley...



## OUR SEA ON A PLATE

CHEF ALESSANDRO BENACQUISTA, FORCE BLUE

SALMON CARPACCIO, BLUEFIN TUNA AND MEDITERRANEAN SHRIMP MARINATED IN TROMBOLOTTO OIL WITH BABY VEGETABLES, SHALLOT VINEGAR AND BUFFALO CREAM

### INGREDIENTS

3/4 lbs (300g) fresh salmon, blast chilled  
3/4 lbs (300g) Bluefin tuna, blast chilled  
4 medium-sized pieces Mediterranean prawns  
1/4 lbs (100g) Campania buffalo stracciatella D.O.P.  
3.4 oz/100 ml pack Trombolotto Infusion (Infuso Dei Templari)  
1 bunch of baby radishes  
1/4 lbs (100g) fine green beans  
3 oz (100ml) shallot vinegar  
1 bunch of fresh tarragon

### METHOD

Defrost the previously blast chilled fish and cut into equal, square pieces which will be use to create a mosaic.

Clean the prawns. Marinate the prawns and the fish in the Trombolotto infusion. Place in the fridge and leave for 1 hour.

Boil about 2 cups (500ml) of water. Add the shallot vinegar. Blanch the radishes and green beans.

Mix the Campania buffalo stracciatella to create a thick sauce. Put mixture in a squeeze bottle or piping bag. Set aside.

Preparing the plates: place the tuna and salmon carpaccio flat alternating between both to create a rectangle. Place one prawn on top in the centre.

Decorate the plate with the stracciatella (doing this in an abstract way allows the mosaic of fish to stand out) and arrange the vegetables on the side. Decorate with tarragon and top with a little Trombolotto infusion for added flavour.

If you wish to customise the recipe, this can be done with any other fish or vinegar to your liking.

Recipe serves 4

## HOT WHEELS

SIGNATURE COCKTAIL, WHEELS

### INGREDIENTS

Spicy salt  
1/4 cup (75 g) kosher salt  
1 tbsp smoked paprika  
Finely grated zest of 1 lime

### Cocktail

2 oz (60 ml) chili infused Tequila  
1 oz (30 ml) Cointreau  
3/4 oz (22 ml) lime juice  
2 oz (60 ml) blood orange juice

### METHOD

Put the spicy salt on a plate.

Use a bowl for the lime juice, or simply wipe the rim of the margarita glass with a lime wedge, ensuring the rim is well coated with lime juice.

Now lower the glass into the spicy salt mixture to coat the edge.

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice.

Add the infused tequila, Cointreau, lime juice and blood orange juice. Cover and shake until chilled, about 15 seconds. A good indicator that the drink is ready is when the shaker mists up.

Strain the cocktail into the prepared glass, garnish with a slice of blood orange and serve with a smile!



## TACHIN

CHEF JOSHUA LEWIS, VICTORIOUS

PERSIAN CRUNCHY BAKED SAFFRON RICE WITH BARBERIES

### INGREDIENTS

2 tsp kosher salt, plus more  
2 cups (400 g) basmati rice  
2 tbsp unsalted butter  
1/2 cup (100 g) dried barberries or  
1 cup (200 g) dried tart cherries  
1 tsp rose water (optional)  
1 tsp saffron threads, finely ground  
3 large egg yolks  
1 cup (200 g) plain whole yogurt (non Greek)  
1/2 cup (125 ml) grapeseed or vegetable oil, plus more for dish

### METHOD

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. While waiting, wash high quality basmati rice with cold water (washing away excess starch will give you fluffier rice). Take care not to break the rice grains.

Add rice to boiling water, giving it a few stirs to prevent it from sticking to the bottom. Cook, stirring occasionally, until rice begins to rise to the top and dance. It will be tender but still have a slight bite to it (8 mins). Drain water away and rinse. Let rice steam and cool slightly.

Preheat oven to 400°F/205°C

Melt butter in a medium skillet over med/low heat. Cook the barberries, stirring often, until plumped slightly and warmed through, about 2 mins. Remove from heat, stir in rose water.

Combine saffron (2 tbsp) and boiling water in a bowl. Let sit for 10 mins. allowing saffron to steep and draw out colour. Mix in egg yolks, yoghurt, 1/2 cup (100g) oil and 2 tsp salt. Scatter rice over yoghurt mixture and gently toss to coat every grain.

Coat 10"/25 cm diameter glass dish with oil or butter. Add half of rice mixture and use palms of hands or measuring cup to lightly compact rice into dish. Scatter half of barberries over top with the remaining rice. Press down again, this time more firmly (this helps with unmoulding).

Place in the oven and cook for 65 mins.