



MEDIA BACKGROUNDER Sample Q & A's

In this interview, Vaughan discusses the pros and cons of being an Onshore versus an Onboard Crew Member. He was interviewed whilst working as a land-based crew member for M.Y. Dubai.

Please note: you are welcome to publish these Q&A's where appropriate without seeking prior approval but please reference to Vaughan Poynter - Author, The DeckCrew Guidebook. www.v7crew.com.

How many years have you been working on superyachts and how did you get into the industry?

I have been working onboard motoryachts since October 1998. My first yacht was MY Double Haven. My entry into the industry was just by chance as I was relieving Deck Officer (Merchant) on leave when I saw an advertisement for a stewardess/steward on a private 50 metre motor yacht in a local paper. With a phone call I asked the agent how I would get a job onboard as a Deck Officer... she advised me and reviewed my C.V., then a month later I was on that yacht.

Where has been your favourite cruising destination so far?

Definitely the waters near Micronesia, in particular Palau... simply paradise and lively.

On the MY Dubai you worked as part of a shore-based crew – what are the advantages of being a shore-based crewmember?

I think privacy and quality of life. You have a choice in what you buy, eat, wear and go. One of the nicest things though is the ability to "go home" to your apartment and sleep in a big bed and be OFF the boat and have that privacy.

Are there any disadvantages?

Unlike living onboard you are faced with traffic, and dealing with normal lifestyle tasks such as getting a drivers licence, paying bills, banking and cleaning.

Do you think increasing the number of shore-based crew jobs would encourage people to stay in yachting long-term?

It definitely does have its appeal for an almost normal type of lifestyle, it's nice to be shore-based and lead a life and enjoy rather than being trapped onboard for extended periods. However, if you are trying to see the world this may not be for you! The contract could play a part as well.

Are there any financial implications of being shore-based?

There can be little or many depending on your own "individual" status. Obviously families may have schooling issues to deal with, tax issues in various countries, the day-to-day expenses such as fuel for cars, insurance and various licensing fees are all part of it.

Does being short-based make the job more 9 to 5 than others you have had on yachts?

It does seem a more regimented business working week, obviously various shifts come into play with in-port manning and duties. There are days similar to a weekend which you could never put a value on...

Does being shore-based mean your vessel goes cruising less?

To a point it does. However, there can be numerous times of standby and short notice.

Do you think being short-based means the crew bonds less, or do you get on better if you aren't always in each other's pockets?

The ethics of the crew are unique. Obviously with a larger crew of 70 or more, smaller "pockets" of crew tend to socialise in their groups and their leisure interests; for example we have some surfers, weekend sailors and serious campers. Each to their own...

Looking for other story ideas? Here are some topics that Vaughan can readily speak about:

- Making the transition from land to water – how a restaurant waiter or dive charter steward can use their skills to secure deck crew positions on a WhiteBoat.
- Surviving the Tsunami – insights into maritime safety in the face of natural disasters.
- Stories from the Sea – adventures and exotic locations are all in a day's work!
- Piracy and Security – what "weekend sailors" can do to safeguard themselves on the water.
- Courses and Training – all new luxury yacht deck courses for newcomers and intermediate crew members are now available.

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