

## Ahoy! Nautilus Yachts Create 'Cruising' Success

Written by Nisary Mahesh

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Cruising in luxury boats is one of the fastest growing leisure activities around the world. Though in India it's a relatively new concept, many Indians started seeking new luxury statements in water. With an idea to make 'leisure boating' affordable in India, Captain Mathew and his son Donny Mathew, from Kochi have set up their firm — **Nautilus Yachts**, in Dubai and Kochi. Nautilus Yachts deals with world's leading yacht brands for the Indian as well as foreign markets.

Being worked as a Master Mariner for 35 years, Captain Mathew had a wide exposure to projects across the globe. With his yacht enthusiast son around, along with his companion Joseph, they decided to start Nautilus Yachts. Donny Mathew was previously employed as the General Manager with a leading yacht manufacturer in the Middle East and prior to that had spent 3 years in the business development of a leading automotive group in the Middle East. Their diverse experience imparted a question in them "Why don't we have yachts in India"? Donny Mathew speaks about yachts and his company to Small Enterprise India.

### **Please tell us something about your company.**

Nautilus Yachts started in Dubai in 2006 and has expanded its operations in India, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman with both sales and service centers.

We are the leading luxury yacht dealers in Asia-Middle East-Africa and exclusively represent the top 16 yacht brands worldwide, including- hi-speed ferries, specialised vessels and boat brands from Italy, USA, Norway and Spain, besides our own brands. Our yacht and mega yacht portfolio is the widest in the world with boats starting from 17 feet and going over 200 feet Mega Yachts.

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We have also launched a range of luxury hotel yachts and luxury house boats from USA. These offer a very unique concept in the hospitality industry.

### **Please tell us about the brand Nautilus?**

A range of boats under our own brand name is being manufactured from our offshore facility in Bangkok with an Italian team. Yachts made in Bangkok are being shipped to India. Our idea is to make 'leisure boating' affordable in India.

### **Why didn't you choose India for your manufacturing units?**

We are dealing with clients world wide. So an international standard has to be made for our products. Indian market is in the blooming stage. So there is lack of highly experienced people. But we do have a plan to have manufacturing units in India soon.

### **Does yachting in India have huge growth potential?**

There is a visible change in people's lifestyle choices and attitude towards leisure. This growth is being fuelled by an upbeat Indian economy as disposable incomes and aspirations are rising. We have clients even in Delhi where there is no space for water rides. Along with all this there is the linking of yachting and the hospitality industry.

With its vast coastal lines and backwaters, India has huge potentials.

### **Is it true that next to Mumbai, Kerala is fast growing in this segment?**

Kochi has the natural resources, a steady development of infrastructure. Only Kochi in India is having a marina with international standards. This also is a boost to the industry keeping away

parking blues.

We find builders showing interest in yachting as a value-added entity for their projects. We have already got lots of orders from city-based customers. The more moving models in India are the one's ranging from 5m to 4bn, still we have a client in Kerala who booked one with 40bn tag.

### **New Models / Features and Ranges?**

Some luxury models like N 36 Cruiser and N 27 Coupe Cruiser, are specifically designed for Indian waters. The former can accommodate 12 passengers and the latter, eight people. Ranging from 20 ft to 200 ft, the prize varies on size as well as brands. There are yachts starting from 50 lakhs to 250 crores. The base model is a 70ft Absolute, an Italian company. These are like five-star hotels, many with gyms, jacuzzis, office space and a party room.

We have introduced a new range of Luxury Hotel Yachts from USA. These yachts open up a whole new area of business opportunity for an existing hotel group or anyone who is entering the hospitality business.

### **What are the challenges you face?**

People are not being aware of this beautiful leisure and its business potentials especially in the hospitality industry. Secondly there is a notion that it is rich man's game.

### **What are your marketing techniques?**

Luxury boats are addictive, so if someone gets one, there is a great possibility that in a few years, they will want a bigger boat. So customer satisfaction holds utmost priority and importance in our marketing tool.

Also we publish a magazine Yachting Times with top news in yachting industry circulated among the business class. This is intended to create an interest among people.

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We also have Authorised Dealers (NAD) with local knowledge, experience and local service support to ensure our global presence.

### Future plans

As Indian market is rapidly growing we expect a 20% growth in business every year. We are doing our best to provide our customers with tailor made yachts for Indian waters, at a competitive price. Along with our promise for effective after-sales service we have also located private Marinas where owners without a private jetty can moor their yachts. Manufacturing unit in India is also being taken up.