

The high seas

From Classic Yachts to Superyachts, **Upward Curve** sails the high seas to discover four of the very best regattas across Europe and North America

It is America's Cup year and the question on the chapped lips of the sailing community is; can the Golden Gate Yacht Club win a third successful title? Or will one of the healthy group of challenging teams (including the innovative Team Emirates New Zealand) beat them in Bermuda?

Either way, it is without doubt that, while the America's Cup may be the oldest and most prestigious event on the calendar, it is certainly not the only regatta worth attending.

The 2017 season opens on the Mediterranean with an embarrassment of riches at the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta and the 22nd edition of Les Voiles d'Antibes.

Upward Curve speaks to the organisers of each of those distinguished events, plus those at Mallorca's Superyacht Cup Palma and the Candy Store Cup Superyacht Regatta in America's Rhode Island.

CANDY STORE CUP

The 2016 Candy Store Cup may have been the first, but the event – which is based on the St. Barts Bucket – dates back to the first lay day when the America's Cup was held in Newport in 1977. "Last year was fabulous," recalls David Ray, owner of Bannister's Wharf and founder of the original Candy Store Cup.

"It was way beyond our expectations. Due to a lot of tremendous efforts and support from previous owners and

sponsors, including Sentient Jet, we were immensely proud."

From cocktail and owner parties, to post-race soirees and yacht-hopping, finished off with dinner, concert and awards ceremony, this is a meeting of incredible yachts, professional race management and light-hearted fun. "The Candy Store Cup knocked the ball out of the park," recalls Dan Meyers, Meteor skipper.

"It was the perfect mixture of everything, great venue, professional race management and the social side was FUN. Hats off to the organizers, they clearly have done their share of Buckets and Superyacht Regattas and took the best and left the rest behind."

THE SUPERYACHT CUP PALMA 2017

The 21st anniversary of the inaugural Superyacht Cup sees the addition of a Corinthian Class that features an attractive entry level and a transparent scoring system. The key global location of Mallorca makes it the leading Superyacht hub in the industry and the market is becoming more active every year. "When the America's Cup was in Valencia in 2007, the atmosphere here was incredible," remembers Event Director Kate Branagh.

Right: Candy Store Cup Regatta, Rhode Island Above: Superyacht Cup Palma crews are committed to an ecological agenda

"We hosted a record 53 boats. It started out with us not knowing how popular the event would be, then turned into the biggest ever."

The four-day event in the Bay of Palma is hosted by the Real Club Nautico de Palma with the Regatta Village located at Muelle Viejo – the iconic Palma Cathedral and palm tree-lined Paseo Marítimo providing a stunning back-drop. The Superyacht Cup is the first of

its kind to have a true ecological agenda, engaging crews and owners to work towards restoring ocean health with Sailors for the Sea's Clean Regattas programme (sailorsforthesea.org) ➤



Portfolio

REGATTAS

In 2016, the Superyacht Cup provided reusable bottles free-of-charge to crews (up to 40 people). They delivered 15L recyclable water containers for the crew to refill and recycle, cutting down on single-use bottles. "We can't enforce it, but we do encourage teams to contribute to the effort," explains Branagh.

"We have 90% commitment – people see the benefits and understand the disastrous consequences of doing nothing."

LES VOILES D'ANTIBES CLASSIC YACHT REGATTA

The first of the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge marks the deadline for the classic yacht community to have their boats ready and returned to the northern hemisphere, primed for racing. The event has grown from 12 boats in 1996 to 79 boats in 2016. "The event has changed to become more competitive," explains the Les Voiles D'Antibes Classic Yacht Regatta Event Director Yann Joannon.

"The important thing 25 years ago was for owners and crews

just to be together and enjoy some sailing. For the past ten years, we have seen there is a group of owners and crews here to race. People invest money and they want to win."

The coastal waters between the bay of Antibes and Juan-les-Pins, in south-east France, play host to a fleet of exquisite boats, primed to challenge over five days. The crew parties are legendary in Port Vauban – Europe's largest marina – which transforms into a music festival for the week, attracting neighbouring residents from Monaco and Cannes. "It is always a challenge to manage the event," adds Joannon.

"But when you see the crews arriving happy and leaving even happier. When you see kids

Above: The fleet in Port Vauban at Les Voiles D'Antibes Classic Yacht Regatta Below: The majestic 'Saudade' at Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta

watching the boats with big smiles and bigger aspirations, that reminds you of why you do it."

LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT REGATTA

Now in its tenth year, the Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta will take place on azure Sardinian waters for four days in late May, with an impressive fleet of Superyachts (starting from a minimum of 100 feet) competing in a series of coastal races through the glittering coastal scenery of the Archipelago di La Maddalena

This annual event is renowned not only for the spectacular yachts competing, but also for the glamorous entertainment programme organised by Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, Boat International Media and the title sponsor Loro Piana. "The passion and dedication of our race management team, and our entire staff, in the continuous quest for excellence drives us to remain at the forefront in our sector," says Commodore Riccardo Bonadeo.

"It is no wonder that Superyachts from all around the world like to compete here."

With its stunning Porto Cervo clubhouse, yacht owners and crew can expect exclusive hospitality services and the highest level of racing. ■



THE DIARY

30 May - 3 June:
Loro Piana Superyacht Regatta

Porto Cervo, Sardinia, Italy
yccs.it

31 May - 4 June:
Les Voiles d'Antibes Classic Yacht Regatta

Antibes, France
voilesdantibes.com

21-24 June:
Superyacht Cup Palma
Mallorca, Spain
thesuperyachtcup.com

27-29 July: Candy Store Cup Superyacht Regatta
Rhode Island, US
candystorecup.com