

Balearic beauty

The 30th annual Palma Superyacht Cup Regatta was held in Palma this June. Frances and Michael Howorth look at the event history and the yachting life surrounding the regatta

Each year, as snow covering the Tramuntana mountains of Mallorca begins to melt, superyacht owners and captains begin thinking about their spring and summer sailing plans while completing their entry applications for the Superyacht Cup Palma. The event was established in 1996 and is now the longest-running superyacht regatta in Europe. Each year it attracts some

Below: Yacht racing in one of the most stunning stretches of water in the world – the Bay of Palma, off Mallorca

of the world's largest and most prestigious sailing yachts, along with their owners and guests, to the island of Mallorca for a unique festival of competitive racing in the Bay of Palma.

In 2026, the regatta celebrated three decades of owner-led racing, returning to the newly redeveloped Club de Mar-Mallorca Marina, further reinforcing the city's position – and that of the wider Mediterranean – as the epicentre of the global sailing superyacht community. The marina's transformation reflects

both ambition and long-term investment, mirroring the forward-thinking outlook shared by the regatta and Richard Mille, its new title partner.

The Superyacht Cup combines professionally managed yacht racing in reliable sea conditions with a relaxed and informal social atmosphere. The event's private Race Village becomes the focal point for owners, guests, sponsors and sailors to network and socialise after racing. Since its founding, the Cup has championed this owner-driven ethos, underpinned by world-class

race management. The appeal lies in the fact that mostly, Palma has fairly reliable conditions with a good sea breeze, and in a normal year, a great social time ashore. The racing and the enjoyment of seeing a yacht back on the water with a full team of professional sailors who can truly maximise the yacht's performance is what really gives its owner the ultimate buzz.

With the introduction of a new Multihull Division for 2026, the regatta continues to evolve while remaining true to its heritage. Strong early interest in the newly established division included prospective entries such as Highland Fling, her VPLP sistership Layla, the Nigel Irens / Green Marine-designed Allegra, and the Morelli & Melvin Gaea. Their participation signals the growing dynamism of the sector and adds a compelling new dimension to the event's competitive landscape. Before the Regatta, ►





Allegra's captain Rob Grimm said: "I have been active in expanding the racing options for the growing performance multihull fleet, so I am delighted that the Superyacht Cup Palma is offering the opportunity for us to take part in a regatta that has taken the lead over the decades in advancing superyacht sailing and competition."

Early expressions of interest for the anniversary edition suggested an exceptional fleet, blending notable first-time entries alongside returning champions. Across its five divisions – Superyacht, J Class, Café Racer, Corinthian and Multihull, the Regatta attracted

an impressive cross-section of prospective entries, setting the stage for a landmark edition. Potential first timers included the Wally 100 Inco, 28m Swan Spiip, the Swan 90S Hummingbird (ex-Leonara), and former SYC regular Atalante I, with her new owner and captain keen to make their debut at the regatta.

Returning contenders in 2026 included the Baltic 108 Win Win, a previous cup winner, and 2025 Class A victor, Gelliceaux

Above: 50-metre Erica Below: The Superyacht Cup, Palma Right: Catedral-Basilica de Santa María de Mallorca

and runner-up Cervo a 39 metre Tripp design. Before the Regatta, Roderick Anderson, her Captain, said: "Win or lose, we've always had a fantastic experience here. After two second-place finishes, 2026 might just be the year we go one better – we'll certainly be doing everything we can to make it happen!"

Other possible returnees included the always impressive J Class yachts, Rainbow and Svea, and the Baltic 68 Café Racers Ganesh and Scorpione Hormar, opening up the possibility of separate classes for each group. Mat Sweetman, the Captain of Rainbow, said: "The Superyacht

Cup Palma occupies a special place on the calendar for J Class racing. The combination of competitive sailing, exceptional race management and the atmosphere ashore makes it a regatta we always look forward to. Celebrating the 30th anniversary feels particularly fitting, and Rainbow is delighted to be part of an event that continues to respect tradition while evolving with the sport."

The 2026 edition was a beautiful celebration of the Superyacht Cup Palma's heritage, paired with its trademark evolution and innovation. ■ thesuperyachtcup.com

