

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Flagstone Property Group helps initiate Miami's developing yacht culture

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The Deck at Island Gardens Deep Harbour. Credit: Romain Maurice Photography

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Flagstone Property Group is expanding the yachting lifestyle with the opening of The Deck at Island Gardens in Miami.

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The Deck at Island Gardens is the latest addition to the still-developing superyacht marina, which aims to offer a singular hotspot to complement yachting. With Miami becoming a yachting haven, the extension to lifestyle branding and community is a natural step in developing the sector's appeal to capitalize on growth opportunity without compromising exclusivity.

"With the growing demand for superyachting, especially with the rising trend of the chartering business here in the U.S., we created The Deck at Island Gardens to complement the Deep Harbour marina experience with a cohesive, one-stop waterfront destination lounge," said Mehmet Bayraktar, CEO and chairman, Flagstone Property Group. "Today's superyacht owners seek amenities that fit the luxurious lifestyle they have on board, so we ensure this continues after they anchor in Miami.

"The Deck is the city's newest entertainment hotspot, creating a high-end, branded marina experience for our international yachting clients and Miami elite," he said. "Miami has emerged on the world stage as a center for luxury, attracting the international yachting community. Before The Deck at Island Gardens and Deep Harbour, there really weren't any high-end amenities that the elite yacht owner could enjoy on land that rivaled the at-sea experience. Now, the global rich have access to Miami's most exclusive experiences.

"Our clients can enjoy the marina as a true destination, instead of just a place to dock their superyacht."

Yachters' retreat

The Island Gardens Deep Harbour, located on Miami's Watson Island, aims to bring together music, food, entertainment, health and leisure activities in one location, complemented by a view of the water and some of the world's largest yachts.

The Deck at Island Gardens will host the "Friday Night Dinner Party" series, taking place each week from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. The deck will serve items inspired by popular yachting locales such as a salad nicoise, a trademark of the Cote D'Azur, and guests will also be able to feast their eyes on Miami's skyline.



The Deck at Island Gardens

WELLTH Saturdays will offer sunset yoga and related wellness activities, with celebrity guest chefs and local health and wellness partners augmenting the events with further offerings.

Sundays will feature a brunch buffet, and guests can also reserve waterfront cabanas overlooking the yachts. At sunset, a party will be thrown speakeasy style, with wining, dining and dancing lasting into the night.

The Deck at Island Gardens will be open to global marina clients, both locals and those who arrive via superyacht. The Marina has already embedded itself into the locale and yachting world by hosting the Superyacht Miami Show in February.

Future plans for the development include two luxury hotels, curated waterfront dining, high-end experiential retail and a public water taxi transportation system.



The Deck at Island Gardens

With consumers trending toward preference for experiences rather than materials, it is no surprise that those associated with the yachting sector are aiming to build or enhance a more comprehensive lifestyle to go with the products.

Offering a hub for yachters who commingle with like-minded consumers helps to generate a more complete culture and create desire among outsiders, thereby helping a sector that can be notoriously difficult to initiate newcomers into.

The next generation

Superyachts provide a peerless luxury for the ultra-wealthy, but selling the segment on the industry is still a challenge, according to an executive at Wealth-X.

Superyacht owners make up an elite portion of the elite, as the 4,476 of them average \$10 million at resale while Wealth-X's ultra-high-net-worth threshold begins at \$30 million, meaning many of the 212,000 of them cannot afford superyachts. The segment is still concentrated in Anglophone nations, but the changes in the industry are slowly making the product more appealing to a broader portion of the ultra-wealthy ([see story](#)).

Island Gardens creates a more visible but equally exclusive focal point to spur the want for inclusion, while the amenities and events blend with the level of service that UHNW individuals crave.

While the recent influx of yachting activity in Miami primarily favors the ultra-affluent, its conflation with the sharing economy has led to options for aspirational yacht owners as well.

New luxury travel company Immidia recently launched its mobile application with a promise to be Uber for yachts.

Immidia will allow consumers to hail a yacht to charter for private use, with delivery promised in no more than a couple hours. The new digital economy has encouraged a consumer mindset based around immediately fulfilling wants and needs, and the app represents a further step in the direction of on-demand luxury ([see story](#)).

"The aim for the Island Gardens development, in its entirety, is to solidify Miami's place on the map as the next capital for the world's largest yachts," Mr. Bayraktar said. "Miami is unique in comparison to the other destinations on the yachting circuit. Buzzing with cosmopolitan energy, Miami is a global city with modern conveniences that satisfies those seeking ultimate relaxation and the finest in luxury.

"When the yachting set sails into North America's first superyacht marina, Deep Harbour at Island Gardens, they will enjoy the finest in music, culinary, leisure and entertainment at The Deck at Island Gardens, with elements of the yachting circuit's various Ports of Call from Monaco to St. Tropez."

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