

ASIA-PACIFIC BOATING

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2011

ON THE MONEY IN ASIA

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New sailing events in Asia
The yachting scene in
Vietnam

Plus the Monte Carlo
76, Leopard 46,
Princess V85-S and
Moonen's *Northlander*



Hong Kong, China
Singapore
Malaysia
Thailand
China
Philippines
Rest of Asia
Rest of World

HKS70
S\$10 (inc GST)
M\$25
B\$45
RMB75
P\$270
US\$9
€10

India
Indonesia
Australia
New Zealand
Japan
S Korea
Europe
U.S.A.

RS915
RP50,000 (inc tax)
A\$10
NZ\$10
¥885
W7320
€10
US\$11



RENDEZVOUS ROUND-UP

Tork Buckley visits the Asia Superyacht Rendezvous and finds an event that both highlights the advantages of Phuket as a yachting destination, and will help put Phuket on the superyacht map

► **THE EXQUISITE WATERS OF THE ANDAMAN SEA SURROUNDING PHUKET OFFER ONE OF THE REGION'S MOST STRIKING CRUISING GROUNDS.** Glitzy, but not Med-style crowded or as frenetic as city destinations like Singapore, it also offers bases from which to explore deserted Andaman beaches or experience an exotic Myanmar visit.

It is hardly surprising that the Thai island has been host to the Asia Superyacht Rendezvous for years. For the 2010 event, organisers Asia Pacific Superyachts celebrated the first decade of the event by bringing new sponsors Merle Wood and Rolling Stock alongside principal and so far perpetual sponsor Feadship Royal Dutch Shipyards.

That Feadship is the core sponsor might suggest this is an event for motoryachts, but it's also for sailing superyachts – the sole qualification is to be invited, and to be longer than 100 feet. This year, unusually late bad weather delayed four participating yachts; the 32-metre *Naos*, the 55-metre *Shenandoah*, and the motor-sailors *Silolona* (50 metres) and *Montigne* (57 metres). This meant there was only one sailing yacht. However that one yacht – the 50-metre *Perseus* – is a signature example of the Perini Navi marque. Bruce Brakenhoff of Perini commented that they always manage to have one or more Perinis in Southeast Asia, either visiting or as part of their circumnavigation route.

Others, such as *Lady Arraya* are locally based. This yacht's owner hosted attendees to the first night cocktails aboard in Nai Harn Bay, off the Royal Phuket Yacht Club. It was interesting to visit this iconic 40.3-metre Bannenberg build from 1990, formerly known as *Opal C*. The yacht was in fine condition, having been in sole ownership from build until its very recent acquisition. She will soon go into an intense charter programme, alongside the owner's regionally-based large sailing yacht. The bay is known for the best surf in the island, so the shore to RIB transfer was rather moist, but guest enjoyment wasn't dampened.

The rendezvous is all about water and land-based activity, the weather-blocked yachts meant the first day's on-water race event was a sail past by *Perseus*. In a rainsquall, she managed to grab some good air and showed off her paces. *Lady Arraya* and *Silver Zwei* followed behind while *Maverick II* was the committee boat. *Perseus* had just competed



Photo: Kevin Miller

in the Phuket King's Cup and even though she outsized her nearest class rival by 26 metres, she still enjoyed tough competition, struggling to best a fleet that was better suited to light airs.

The afternoon was free for owners, guests and crew to enjoy beach or shore-explore time or perhaps mentally prep themselves for the evening's "Challenge". A signature feature since 2000, this Feadship event took place during the buffet arranged around the pool at The Surin. This iconic hotel formerly The Chedi has long been considered the island's top hotel. Its location still inspires awe, and it will be completely refurbished next March, to bring it up to 21st century resort standards.

A sumptuous buffet was followed by the wonderfully ridiculous "The Challenge". Yacht crews are given a bag of various materials and have to design, build and race a model yacht from what lies within. Teams need lung power as well as brain power; a team member blows the yacht down a specially-prepared trough and back again. An additional hazard is introduced after run one; a beer must be downed or a deep-fried grub or frog leg chewed and swallowed before blowing onwards.

Twelve teams started, with the final three being surprise late entry *The Media*, *Silver Zwei* and the eventual winners, the crew of *Vie Sans Souci*, a 36-metre motoryacht built in Taiwan.

Day two kicked off with an eight-yacht fleet cruise for a photo op. The fleet steamed north from Surin in diagonal line astern. From *Perseus* were *Cavallino*, *Lady Arraya*, *Maverick*, *Noble House*, *Silver Zwei*, *Vie Sans Souci* and *Major Affair*. *Ananta* was unable to participate but enjoyed the shore activities.

The event should go from strength to strength and eventually attract more superyachts, whose presence aids the region's development as a yachting destination. Some have suggested that perhaps a charitable element could be introduced as in other such rendezvous in Asia and elsewhere. Organisers have noted that participants are keen on such ideas, and they are to be incorporated in future events. The idea has merit. Such displays of social responsibility sit well with many of the new generation of socially-aware and PR-savvy owners. It also helps to justify the joys of discovering and experiencing the best that Thailand generally and Phuket specifically have to offer the superyacht owner and crew. ■■■

www.asia-superyacht-rendezvous.com



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