

Sail away with me



Reviewed by: Laura Fulton

With its history of pearl diving, it's no wonder the UAE is home to so many boating enthusiasts. Le Royal Meridien gives patrons a chance to experience the sailing life with the Shuja Yacht dinner cruise.

The boat - harboured at the marina opposite Marina Mall - boards at 8.00pm and sets sail at 8.30pm. Welcomed aboard with a drink, because the yacht is affiliated with a hotel, choices are fruit juice or a sparkling beverage.

While the wobbles mostly work themselves out once the boat sets sail, the motion of the yacht is simply the nature of the beast, as is the fact that the meal is served buffet-style, as much of the food must be prepared beforehand. With a firm focus on seafood, the impressive spread is fresh and tasty. From the fat Omani lobster tails to the authentic prawns - complete with heads - and whole grilled crabs, everything is well prepared.

In addition to the sea fare, the buffet also has a wide selection of salads and starters plus plenty of traditional vegetables, rice and stew. Chicken, beef and Sultan fish are prepared fresh on an open barbeque - no small feat on a boat - and the self-serve process allows diners to taste one of everything on the dessert table.

Of course, the true star of this show isn't just the food but the whole experience. Lined with wide windows, both upper and lower decks afford a unique view of the lights and buildings along the Corniche. Romantic and serene, it's a nice way to enjoy the calm Gulf waters and a lovely meal at the same time.

What? Le Royal Meridien's Shuja Yacht

Where? The boat sails from the marina opposite Marina Mall

Why? Not your typical dining experience; the view is worth the trip

Why not? The craft bobs noticeably in the harbour; true landlubbers may feel a little queasy

We say: A fun night out; give it a try

Cost: AED 220 for the buffet, including welcome drink and water

Contact: 02 674 2020