



TOP 10 YACHTING TIPS FROM THE BAHAMAS

A MESSAGE FROM THE ISLANDS OF THE BAHAMAS
TO THE GLOBAL YACHTING COMMUNITY



To our valued partners in yachting — captains, brokers, managers, and owners — we extend a warm welcome from The Bahamas. With more than 700 islands and cays, unmatched water clarity, and modern yachting infrastructure, The Bahamas is uniquely positioned to deliver premier charter experiences. The following tips are designed to help you plan efficient, compliant, and memorable voyages across 100,000 square miles of the world's clearest waters.

1. DISCOVER A LIFETIME OF ISLANDS

Because The Bahamas isn't a single destination, plan for variety, not just beauty. Each of our 16 islands offers its own unique landscape, culture, and anchorages. Tailor charters to guests' preferences, desired pace, and interests. We encourage you to structure trips by regional groupings:

- Northern Bahamas (Abaco, Grand Bahama): Sailing, fishing, and beach clubs
- Central Bahamas (Nassau, Paradise Island, Andros): Culture, casinos, fine dining
- Southern Bahamas (Exumas, Cat Island, Long Island, Rum Cay): Seclusion, blue holes, exploration, fishing

Pro tip Offering geographic diversity drives guest satisfaction and repeat bookings — a competitive edge not all destinations can claim.

2. CHOOSE FULL-SERVICE ENTRY POINTS

Clear customs and immigration quickly at full-service ports, such as Nassau, Bimini, Marsh Harbour, and Freeport. Superyacht-friendly marinas such as Bay Street Marina and Atlantis Marina in Nassau, and Romora Bay and Valentine's in Harbour Island, provide customs assistance, provisioning, and concierge-level service for seamless guest onboarding.

3. TIME IT RIGHT

Peak yachting season runs from November to May, delivering calm seas, warm breezes, and excellent visibility. The summer months offer favorable cruising conditions, with one caveat: hurricane season in the Atlantic Basin. Plan to actively monitor weather systems from June through November, and be aware that the most activity occurs from mid-August to mid-October.

Pro tip: High-demand periods in The Bahamas include the holiday season, spring breaks, and regatta season (April-May).



4. USE THE FDCC TO STREAMLINE ENTRY

The Bahamas offers two options for cruising permits. For foreign yachts engaged in charter or regular cruising, the Frequent Digital Cruising Card (FDCC) allows unlimited entries over a two-year period — saving time and money. A 100-ft yacht can save thousands in annual fees by using the FDCC over multiple trips. It's a practical alternative not found in many yachting destinations.

5. NAVIGATE WITH LOCAL INSIGHT

Navigating The Bahamas requires awareness of both shallow sandbanks and deeper channels. While modern electronic charts are helpful, conditions can change, and it's best practice to seek local insight from local tourism offices and dockmasters, a Bahamian captain who's familiar with the area, or The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism's Fort Lauderdale-based yachting team.

6. PROVISION WITH CONFIDENCE

Top-tier provisioning is available in islands like Nassau, Abaco, and Freeport, including fresh seafood and produce, fine wine, and luxury goods. In addition, you'll find organic markets, gourmet meats, and convenient direct-to-yacht delivery.

Pro tip: If you're heading to a more remote island, we recommend provisioning in advance with the support of your Bahamian-based agent or concierge.

7. COORDINATE FUEL STOPS

Fuel is available on major islands and at some marinas, but we recommend coordinating refueling stops as part of your overall itinerary, especially when cruising the Southern Islands and during peak season.

Pro tip: Top fuel docks include Nassau Yacht Haven, Emerald Bay Marina (Exuma), Staniel Cay Yacht Club, and Freeport Harbour.

8. ENSURE CHARTER COMPLIANCE

Foreign-flagged yachts conducting charters here must be registered through the proper channels and work with a licensed charter agent. Charter fees must be paid to the Port Department, and all relevant documents, including licenses and permits, must be current. As of 2025, VAT registration is no longer a separate requirement, simplifying the compliance process.

9. EXPLORE BEYOND THE USUAL STOPS

With 16 islands and more than 700 cays, it's easy to build a charter itinerary that will delight even the most seasoned seafarers. Dean's Blue Hole on Long Island, San Salvador's dive spots, and the coral systems surrounding Rum Cay introduce guests to the full range of the Bahamian archipelago, creating truly unique and immersive experiences.

10. PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE YACHTING

We encourage all charter operators to respect our marine environment and ensure that guests understand and observe rules regarding fishing, waste disposal, and marine park boundaries. Note that lobster season runs from August 1 to March 31, spearfishing is prohibited with scuba gear, and fishing permits are required (and easily obtained through local marinas and agents).

Pro tip: Sustainable practices ensure our waters remain pristine for everyone. Use eco-friendly products and proper anchorage techniques, and adhere to wildlife protection practices.



WE INVITE YOU TO

DOCK, ANCHOR, AND DISCOVER

See what sets The Bahamas' yachting experience apart. From The Abacos to Andros to The Exumas, our islands offer a rare combination of adventure, luxury, and ease. Whether your guests are seeking tranquility or adventure, a short cruise or an extended voyage, a family get-together or a getaway with friends, The Bahamas is ready to deliver.

