



MARGOT LAURENT

Interview by Clare Mahon



HOW TO FIND A HAPPY MEDIUM BETWEEN A PERSONAL COOKING STYLE AND THE PREFERENCES OF OUR GUESTS

Margot, you are a young and talented chef with good sailing skills too. You have been on board SW105 Sørvind from the delivery in Cape Town in April 2022 all way through the intense summer cruising and charter season in Med. Like other creatives, each chef has a unique vision for food. What is your cooking style for charter guests?

I do what every chef would do, and all of the guests that we had were happy as soon as I started working my magic and wowing them. I was lucky, I guess. Some of the guests that we had last summer had more sophisticated tastes, some more classic, but pretty much everybody agreed on my cooking.

How useful are the Charter Guests Preference Sheets in helping you to organize the menus?

It really helped me that the brokers went over the Preference Sheet so carefully with the charter guests before they arrived. I had also had in depth phone calls with each of the principle charterers so that I could directly discover the unique preferences and expectations of each party. That played a major part in helping me provision and be prepared as best as I possibly could for the upcoming charter.

What were the nicest moments of the year aboard Sørvind?

There are two separate moments that stand out as highlights of the summer aboard Sørvind. Firstly, the maiden voyage. I had never done a delivery like that, sailing from Cape Town to Mallorca so it was intense and incredible, an adventure unto itself. After that, when the charter season started, we had some excellent guests who were really happy to involve the stewardess and myself in the choices for menus and wines. We would do tastings together trying to find the best pairings of wine and food and that kind of interaction between guests and crew, capped off with providing them the best experience was absolutely amazing. With guests that trusted us 100% we had the confidence that we could really make them happy and had all the tools to make that happen.

Do you have any tips to give a chef who wants to become a charter yacht chef?

My advice to anyone wanting to become a charter yacht chef would be “put your ego aside.” Sometimes the point of view of the guests might not fit with your idea of cooking. You are aboard the yacht to please and your goal must be to make the guests as happy as possible. Put your ego aside and do what makes the charter guests happy and do it as best you can. I think a lot of chefs tend to forget that a particular trait of the job is that you’re not here to shine, you’re here to please. A charter is to provide a living experience and the food is just a part of that. Much as you may identify with the cuisine you make, you have to put that aside for a while. If somebody were to ask me for a poached egg I will do it and try my best to see the guest smile.

“PUT YOUR EGO ASIDE AND DO WHAT MAKES THE CHARTER GUESTS HAPPY AND DO IT AS BEST YOU CAN.”



Any tips for a Charter Guest for getting the most out of their charter experience?

As for guests, to get the best experience from their charter I'd tell them to put a lot of thought into what they say on the Preference Sheet because that's what my colleagues and I are going to base everything on. Fill it out properly and try to add as much detail as you can because that lets us do our best for you. The time we have to prepare for new charter guests is short, so the more info we get about the guests, the better we "know" them before they arrive, the better we can take care of them during the charter.

ABOUT MARGOT

French, born in 1996

Margot grew up in Tahiti where she developed early a passion for the ocean and all water sports. She started culinary school at 14. During the six years leading to her bachelor in gastronomy, she had the opportunity to work under the command of some of the best chefs all around the world.

Her passion for travel and gastronomy led Margot to the yachting industry. She has been Sørvind chef from April to October 2022.

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