

E-NEWSLETTER

by Beth Crabtree

Annual U.S. Sail and Powerboat Shows In Annapolis

October marks the 42nd United States Sailboat Show and the 40th United States Powerboat Show in Annapolis, MD. Produced annually on consecutive weekends by U. S. Yacht Shows, Inc., these great shows mark two of the most significant events in the boating industry's year. This year, the Sailboat Show opens Thursday, October 6 and runs through Monday, October 10, followed closely by the Powerboat Show, Thursday, October 13 through Sunday, October 16.

Sponsored by BoatU.S., each of these remarkable shows features many premiering boats and the latest in marine technology. Exhibitors and vendors will be on site with new electronics, gadgets, and accessories by favorite marine manufacturers. In addition to free seminars Friday through Sunday, both shows will offer the very popular Take The Wheel interactive boating classes, which include classroom instruction, demonstration rides, and social time. At the Sailboat Show, see dinghies, racing hulls, cruisers, and catamarans. At the Powerboat Show, see a full range of vessels including inflatables, sportfishing, trawlers, and luxury yachts.

Thursday is VIP Day for each show. A modestly increased ticket price provides serious buyers the opportunity to see the boats and meet with dealers before the big weekend crowds arrive. And the crowds do come. These shows attract nearly 100,000 people from all fifty states and around the world.

To read more about the shows, including premiering boats, show history, accommodations, parking, and more, click on [LINK](#). For tickets and more details visit www.usboat.com, or call 410-268-8828.

United States Sailboat and Powerboat Shows: A Boater's Wonderland

For a boater, walking the docks of the U.S. Sailboat and U.S. Powerboat Shows is like being a kid in a candy shop. Everywhere you turn are gadgets and gear you'd love to have aboard. Your dream boat is on display nearby. And all around are folks who share your passion for getting out on the water. Every year, boaters from around the nation and beyond come to Annapolis to be part of the largest and oldest in-water boat shows in the country.

"It's a magical time of year here in Annapolis. There is no better place on earth to browse, to tour, and to buy the boat of your dreams," says Paul Jacobs general manager of U.S. Yacht Shows, Inc., which produces both shows. Jacobs and his team are optimistic about this year's events. "Our shows are shaping up to be very strong this fall. They are growing back to the glory days of pre-2008. With all the various activities and show features, attendance should be strong again this year. We draw

an audience from all 50 states, with over a dozen foreign countries represented as well. This is truly an international event," he says.

For those involved in producing the show, there is a palpable "buzz" that builds in the weeks leading up to the opening. Beginning three days before the first show, over 100 dedicated short-term employees build and fill a temporary marina in the Annapolis harbor. A mile and a quarter of dock is supported by 62 pilings driven just for the shows. Six hundred platforms hold tents, and six miles of electrical cable provide each dock with electricity. Every dock also has water and a fire safety system.

Walk through Annapolis in October and you'll see the coffee shops, restaurants, and watering holes filled with boat dealers, marine services providers, boating apparel exhibitors, and lending and insurance agents. You'll recognize them by their deck-friendly shoes, their sociable demeanor, and their suntanned faces etched with character from hours on the water.

Why Come To Annapolis?

Annapolis is a central part of the boating industry, and many maritime companies have chosen to locate here. Here, boaters feel like they're in the middle of it all. Geoff McCord general manager for Bavaria Yachts USA explains, "In deciding where to locate, we did research and marketing. Annapolis is the hub of the sailing industry in North America. The Annapolis sailboat show pulls from all 50 states, and all the major players from Europe are here. Annapolis is the largest market in North America. The Chesapeake Bay is a natural draw, and as far as we're concerned, Annapolis is the sailing capital of North America."

On the powerboat side, Beneteau, one of the world's leaders in manufacturing quality yachts, has recently expanded operations to North America by opening, in Annapolis, a marketing and sales office for its powerboats division, and local business Annapolis Yacht Sales has been named the dealer for this region.

Premiering Boats

Because each of the shows is well known and respected within the marine industry, they generate excitement among manufacturers and dealers who understand that such well attended shows are a smart venue to debut new boat models. Expect to see the premier of many new boat designs at each show. Look for sailboats from distinguished manufactures including Bavaria, Dufour, Hunter, The Moorings, and more. The next weekend, expect to see new powerboat designs from Intrepid, Palm Beach Motor Yachts, and Composite Yachts.

Marine Accessories and the Grand Prize

In addition to boat dealers, manufacturers of equipment and gear from around the world bring their newest products and best representatives to the Annapolis shows. This is the place to shop for any item that you ever wished you had on-board. Also

at each show, everyone may register to win the grand prize of a 6-night, 7-day British Virgin Island charter. At the Sailboat Show, the drawing is for a charter aboard a monohull up to 39 feet in length, donated by Sunsail. At the Powerboat Show, the drawing is for a trip aboard a Moorings 372 Powercat. Airfare for two provided by British Virgin Island Tourist Board.

Evolution

The look and feel of the shows has evolved over the years enhancing the spirit of camaraderie and a sense of place in maritime history. "People may have thought that the Internet would take away from boat shows, but it hasn't," says Heather Lougheed vice president of membership for BoatU.S. Consumers may do basic research and comparisons online, but they want to talk in-person and build relationships. The Annapolis shows are heavily attended and important shows. BoatU.S. always has a booth there because the mid-Atlantic is an important boating area. Our members come by to say "hi" because they want to feel a part of a community of boaters. We're there as a bridge between boaters from different parts of the country, and we're there to do our part to make boating worry-free through our loans, insurance, and towing."

"Every year, the shows are better run," Lougheed continues. "The layout improves, and there are more people on more boats. The shows do an excellent job of marketing beforehand and creating events within the shows to make them into weekends that people look forward to every year. But, the focus continues to be on bringing in new boaters and revitalizing the love of boating in current owners and to inspire the dream of moving up."

Seminars

Each day, Thursday through Sunday of the sailboat show, *Cruising World* will offer free seminars on pertinent topics such as buying a boat, cruising safely, and weather. At both shows, *Chesapeake Bay Magazine* and Annapolis School of Seamanship will also present informative free seminars led by the pros. Friday and Saturday of each show, the very popular Take The Wheel interactive boating classes will be offered, which include classroom instruction, lunch, demonstration rides, and a cocktail reception. Register early. Last year this course, presented by Annapolis School of Seamanship, was sold out.

Tickets and Times

Tickets are available online at www.usboat.com and at ticket booths outside show entrances. General admission tickets are \$17 for adults, \$4 for children ages 7 to 12, and free for children six and under; 2-day pass tickets cost \$29; VIP tickets are \$35; 2-day pass VIP tickets are \$47. Gates open at 10 a.m. Closing times vary from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Parking is available for \$10 at the U. S. Naval Academy Navy-Marine Corps Stadium at the corner of Rowe Boulevard and Taylor Avenue. A free shuttle runs to the show site from one hour before opening to one hour after closing. On Saturday October 8,

due to a Navy home football game, parking will be at alternate sites on Riva Road, starting at Annapolis High School. Look for electronic signs to guide you. Free shuttles will run from the alternate sites.

Food is plentiful along Main Street around the show site at Annapolis' City Dock. On Compromise Street, the Fleet Reserve Club's pit beef sandwiches are a favorite and sold to the public only during the boat shows. Next door, Pusser's is known for its soothing Painkillers and outdoor seating located in the heart of the show. On the opposite side of the docks, Sofi's Crepes is a small shop serving large crepes filled with delicious ingredients of your choice. Locals in the marine industry like to gather in Eastport at Davis' Pub or the Boatyard Bar and Grill.

Accommodations of all types can be found within walking distance of the shows. Choices include hotels, bed and breakfasts, inns, and whole-house rentals. More choices are within a ten-minute drive from the show. Visit www.usboat.com and click on "Accommodations" for more details.

Special events are planned by many establishments for boat show weekends. Saturday October 8 at 6 p.m. the Eastport Yacht Club Boat Show Bash takes place outdoors under tents and is open to the public at 317 First Street. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Proceeds benefit two local boating non-profit groups. Get the details at www.eastportyc.org.

If you are interested in learning more about the maritime history of Annapolis, visit the Annapolis Maritime Museum, 723 Second St. in the Eastport section of the city.

To see Annapolis, Watermark Tours offers walking tours through the U.S. Naval Academy and the historic district. They also offer narrated boat tours of Spa Creek departing weekdays noon-4pm and weekends 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. from the boat show taxi stand near the Spa Creek drawbridge. Visit www.watermarkcruises.com for details.

Tips for Maneuvering

The easiest times to move around the docks and to see the boats are the first and last two hours of the day. Wristbands given at the gates allow attendees to go in and out of the show, so take a lunch break and explore Annapolis. Wear a pair of shoes that is easy to slip off. When boarding boats, many dealers ask that attendees remove their shoes. Children are welcome, but it's too crowded and not safe for strollers on the docks. The same advice goes for dogs. Annapolis is a very dog-friendly town, but inside the show a leash would be challenging. Also, there's no place for a doggy potty break. Finally, watch out for others. Attendees will often stop midstride on the busy walkways as a handsome hull, a piece of practical gear, or an old friend momentarily diverts their attention. No worries; it's all part of the Annapolis Boat Show Experience.

For more information, click on www.usboat.com for all the details.