

First Edition

THE BOAT OWNERS COLLECTION



Choosing A Marina A checklist for selecting the best one



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The Boat Owner's Collection: Choosing a Marina

A checklist for selecting the best one

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How can you find the best home for your sailboat?

Some boats are anchored in safe bays, moored along private docks or set between pilings. The majority of boats, however, live in marinas. Choosing the best marina for your boat depends on your particular requirements. A boat owner that plans on living full time on the boat will have different needs and requirements than an owner that is simply looking for a place to store the boat.

Whether you're looking for a long-term home for you and your boat or in the process of finding a seasonal berth for safe keeping, this checklist will help you ask a variety of helpful questions.

The objectives of using this checklist are as follows:

- To consider your requirements for you and your boat
- To determine what you need to know to make an informed decision when comparing a variety of marinas
- To research the information most relevant to your situation so to find the best marina for your needs/requirements

Instructions: Review the 'Marina Selection Criteria Table' and determine what information is relevant for your particular needs. Cross off any items that don't apply to your situation. For example, if you're looking for a marina to store the boat rather than use it as a weekend vacation home, you might be more interested in cost, security systems and proximity to your current residence. If, however, you plan on using the boat as a vacation home, you might be interested in marina facilities, local restaurants and weekend noise levels.

Once you've decided what criteria is relevant, copy and print your list in preparation for your fact-finding mission. Using the Internet, email and phone gather as much information as possible. And if possible, visit the marina you intend on using. During your visit, use the accompanying 'Questions to ask tenants' checklist.

Marina Selection Criteria Table (1 out of 6)

Name of Marina	
Location of Marina	
Can you get to the marina (height/draft maximums)?	
Are slips available?	
Cost of slip/berth?	
Is there a discount for longer stays?	
Is there a fee for live-aboard status?	
Does the marina cater to your needs? Ex. Do they accept liveaboards?	
Is the proximity from your home, airport or other transportation link to the marina acceptable?	
Is the marina easy to get to and from inexpensively?	
Insurance restrictions - Do you need a certain level of insurance to berth your boat at this marina?	
Is there a fuel dock?	
Is there water hook up? Is there a fee for water?	

Marina Selection Criteria Table (2 out of 6)

Is there an electricity hook up that matches the requirements of your boat? What is the fee for electricity?	
Is there a black water tank pump out facility? Is there a fee?	
Does the marina offer boat maintenance and repair services onsite?	
Can you use offsite contractors? Is there a fee associated to doing so?	
Does the marina have a store selling boat parts, spares, etc.? If not, where's the closest boat store?	
Ease of entering and exiting the marina? (Do you have to go through a canal lock to get in/out? Does the tide create difficulties with boat handling?)	
Restrictions of entering an exiting the marina (can you only exit/enter on high tide? Does marina have a gate that closes at a certain time?)	

Marina Selection Criteria Table (3 out of 6)

Are the staff available to help with arrival and departure proceedings? If yes, what hours are they available? VHF number?	
Is there ample protection from swells, storms and adverse weather?	
Is the marina in a hurricane or typhoon area?	
What is the marina's policy on hurricanes/typhoons- must you move your boat if a hurricane/typhoon is coming?	
If a hurricane/typhoon does hit the marina, what are the chances that the marina will survive it?	
If there's a tidal surge how high can the marina go without floating away?	
What is the security like? Are the pontoons locked? Is there a night watchman?	
Does the marina have a hull out facility? What are the restrictions (weight, width, height)?	

Marina Selection Criteria Table (4 out of 6)

Can you winter your boat on-the-hard? Is electricity and security provided?	
Any restrictions?:	
Working on the boat yourself	
Hanging laundry outside	
Parking your bike on the dock	
Having a locker (storage)	
Satellite TV dish	
Using the outside BBQ grill	
Pets?	
What is the standard of toilets and showers? How many are available?	
How far are the bathrooms from the boats?	
Are the following available?:	
WIFI (and does it really work?)	
Cable/Satellite TV	
Coin laundry machines	
Laundry pick-up service	
Boat cleaners	
Wheel barrows	
On the hard or dock storage	
Boat steps availability	
Onsite Shop for ice, groceries...	
Parking	
Mail delivery	

Marina Selection Criteria Table (5 out of 6)

What is the proximity to anchorages, other marina's, day-trip spots with the boat, etc.	
What is the proximity to local restaurants, bars, etc.?	
What is the look and feel of the area?	
Does the marina have points of interest near by (grocery store, parks, attractions)?	
If living aboard...	
Are live aboards are welcome? (Just because a marina permits live aboards doesn't mean that marina staff like them)	
Are other live-aboards present?	
Is there a community or a social setting for live aboards?	
What is hull growth like? For example, is growth on the hull a major problem? Is a hull cleaning mandatory after a month?	
Noises? Is the marina under a flight path? Do tankers or loud party boats go by? Is there a boat yard that has constant noise nearby?	

Marina Selection Criteria Table (6 out of 6)

Smells? Is the marina near a water treatment plant, boggy area or down wind of industry?	
Volcanoes? Is there an active volcano nearby? (If yes, when the ash in the air lands on the boat and then gets wet it turns into an acid).	
Other	

While walking around the marina...questions to ask tenants:

Instructions: If you have the opportunity to visit the marina you intend on choosing, walk the docks and find tenants that have similar requirements that you have. For example, if you're planning on living full time on the boat, find a full time live aboard to talk to. If you don't have the ability to visit the marina, ask the marina staff for a few tenant email address so you can send some of these questions to them.

- How long have you been a tenant? (Try to find someone that will be using the marina in a similar fashion as you and your family: live aboard/weekend use/weekend apartment/just for docking).
- What's it like to _____ (live, visit during weekends, etc.) in this marina?
- Are the marina staff members quick to solve problems or respond to issues?
- Is there a sense of community amongst other tenants?
- Do other tenants look out for each other and keep an eye on things?
- Has there been any crime in the marina? How's the security?
- Is there a difference in noise levels, traffic, etc. on the weekends versus the weekdays?
- Have there been any 'disasters' (tide surge, fire, boat crash, etc.) and how did the marina handle it?
- Are boats substantially affected by external boat wakes, wind or any other outside influence?

- What's the worst thing you've found about being a tenant in this marina?

- What's the best thing about being a tenant in this marina?

- Would you recommend this marina to others?

- Anything else that's important to you (does the WIFI really work? Are pets welcomed? Are wheelbarrows abundantly available or do you have to spend an hour hunting one down? etc.)

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If you have any suggestions, additions or improvements to this table and subsequent questions to ask tenants, please email them to: [Kim@SailingBritican.com](mailto:Kim@SailingBritican.com) and I'll add them to future updates.

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