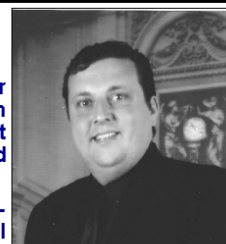


WHAT IS A PERFECT DAY



If you could describe a "perfect day" what would that be? How would a day for "you"

From the moment you opened your eyes to a new day, before the sun rises or maybe after hitting the snooze button a few times too many. What would you set off to do or maybe not do with your day. Traveling offers the traveler this question each and every day with probably the widest variety of endless possibilities, all determined by your mood, interest, current location, desired destination, weather conditions, energy level, budget, desire to do as much or as little with the day.

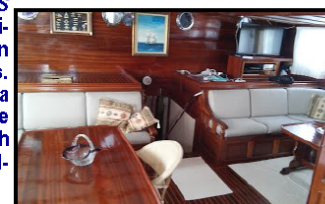


Recently, I took a trip that allowed me to answer that question each day in wonderful ways. A combination of exploring new destinations and lazy afternoons relaxing away from it all. It was a travel experience like no other, and a vacation in every sense of the word. As I made my way through the week, it kept crossing my mind how many types of travelers this type of vacation would appeal to. We sometimes get caught

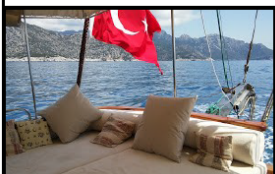
in a rut and find ourselves taking trips that are similar or even in some cases the same as previous travels. Sometimes that may be simply for lack of knowledge of what other options are out there. Another consideration is always the cost of the vacation. Well, I can tell you that you can have this experience and you will not believe just how affordable this amazing vacation experience is.

So, now you are asking where did he go? What is this amazing vacation that he is speaking of, and is it something that would appeal to me? Well, how would you like to spend a week on your own professionally crewed sailing vessel in the Mediterranean where you can explore, relax, dine, dive in, chill out, sleep under the stars, enjoy meeting amazing people, and so much more.

What is a Gulet? A gulet is traditionally a two or three masted wooden vessel that range in length and total occupancy. They are very popular in the Mediterranean with a large number of them located in the Greek Isles, Turkey and Croatia. Gulets are beautifully constructed wooden ships designed with passengers comfort in a personalized setting is taken very seriously. With the ability to travel under sail and by motor it is an experience that is unlike smaller sailing vessels. Beautiful wood sparkles from top to bottom, and any vacation where being barefoot is encouraged, well that is a pretty nice vacation. The vessels are gorgeous and our hosts for the week were the owners of MedSea Yachts aboard the beautiful 30 metre *MedSea ES Canada*. Hosting up to 16 guests in 8 well appointed ensuite staterooms the beautiful *MedSea ES Canada* is a truly magnificent vessel. The staterooms bedding varies from Twins and Queen size beds, but it the staterooms are not the only location to catch some restful sleep. Deck beds atop the sun deck are perfect for those that would like to sleep beneath the stars. Treasure the amazing views out to sea of the celestial sights that unfold every evening of the cruise. The aft of the ship is a combination of a wonderful dining table that can accommodate all of the guests and a truly wonderful couch area that is the perfect spot to curl up with a great book and drift into a lovely nap, as you listen to the lapping ocean as you drift through the Mediterranean on the way to your next port. The vessel boasts a variety of water sports equipment including snorkeling, sailing, windsurfing, and even water skiing to take part in during the time-free days.



Our trip started with a two night stay in the amazing city of Istanbul. Recently, there have been some attacks on this city which is very sad, as the people that we encountered during our stay were truly wonderful and welcomed us with open arms. This metropolitan city of over 4 million people, Istanbul is a magnificent city rich in culture and history. Previously, known in our history books as Constantinople, it has been the center of trade between Europe and Asia since the days of Marco Polo and the Silk Road. We ventured in the historic center of the city visiting sights including the Tokapi Palace, Hagia Sophia, The Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and of course a walk through the Grand Bazaar, which is listed as the oldest ongoing market in the world. Our local guide was very informative and he brought the city to life with his stories and pointing out areas of the city that have remained relatively unchanged for centuries.



Following our all too brief stay in Istanbul, we made our way to the Asian side of the city to depart for the city of Dalaman. A short one hour flight had us arriving closer to our departure for the week aboard the beautiful *ES Canada*. We took a beautiful ride along the coast to the port town of Marmaris. Departing from this resort town of Marmaris, which is situated along the southern coast of Turkey, we met up with our crew and fellow passengers. This particular week we were sailing with two additional passengers for a total of four of us on this magnificent vessel.

The majority of gulet sailings depart on Saturday afternoons and return the following Saturday in the morning or on Friday evening, so that you can arrange to be processed through port security for your continued travels, or for your return back home. The captain and crew are wonderful to offer advice during the week to make the most of your time aboard and in these beautiful destinations. We enjoyed beautiful mornings in tranquil bays and afternoons and evenings in wonderful ports along the Southern Turkish Coast and in the Greek Isles. Unlike larger vessels the *ES Canada* was able to take us into ports of call that were small and quaint and offered an authentic experience in each stop that we made. The waters along the coast are crystal clear and as you move through various areas along the coastal waters including little inlets and bays the water turns from a rich deep blue, to sensuous turquoise, to vibrant aqua. Sailing along the coastline of this region of Turkey is really the only way to experience the many bays, small islands, and beaches that are only reachable by boat. You really get the chance to take in the famous coastline covered in pine trees and historical ruins chiseled into the cliffs that line up along the coast.

Once you are aboard your meals are all arranged and taken care of by the gulets chef and deckhands. Our Turkish chef cooked amazing dishes from the region with locally sourced vegetables and meats and some delicious fruits, that they picked up in ports along the way. We had fresh fish grilled on deck and some of the best calamari I've ever had. The cuisine was clean and plentiful and the Mediterranean diet is very healthy with amazing salads and yogurt dishes to accentuate the main courses. Special requests were honored when they could be and we never went to bed hungry. Afternoon tea was also a highlight as we sailed along chatting about the previous day or the adventures that were ahead of us. Dining al fresco underneath the starry skies was a real treat and the nights were enjoyable even after sunset when the temperatures were a bit cooler. The towns and ports that we visited along the way were magnificent and ranged in size from small local villages to the ports of Symi and Rhodes. We experienced Greece and it's magnificent examples of beauty, history, and culture. The Greek Island port of Symi was a true highlight, and pulling into this colorful port town it embodied the picturesque Greek spirit. The port town of Selimiye was a hidden treasure during our time in Turkish waters.

I even had the opportunity to steer and navigate the vessel, under the close watchful eye of the captain. For well over an hour, I took the helm and brought us into one of our ports. It was truly a very special part of the trip and I enjoyed the instruction and guidance that Captain Cengiz offered me. He is also great for some great jokes too.

MedSea Yachts is owned and operated by two wonderful people that come from completely different backgrounds. Eileen and Cengiz are a great team and their crew provide a truly amazing travel experience for their guests. From the planning stages all the way through the end of the journey. You will truly never want the trip to end or you will want to take all of them home with you. Eileen a lovely and focused Canadian business professional, became infatuated with the sailing life and fell in love with Turkey and Greece, on her first Gulet cruise. She met Cengiz, the captain of a beautiful Gulet, who came from a Turkish sailing family with deep roots to the seas and shorelines of the Turkish coast and Greek Isles. The two of them developed a wonderful business relationship, that has grown the company to a multi-vessel operation offering several charter itineraries and options for guests to experience a truly wonderful Gulet experience.



Travel and Cruise World can assist you in securing your own private charter on one of these magnificent vessels, or if you are not traveling with a group you may be interested in a cabin charter sailing, which are offered on occasion where you can reserve a cabin onboard for a very modest fare including your meals, etc. for the week.