



**S**tephanie Robinson has been to Mallorca and Malaysia, Alaska and Athens, St. Tropez and Singapore. She's gone kayaking through glaciers in the Aleutian Islands and watched steam pour out of the mammoth rim of Krakatoa. In Greece, she marveled as her eight-year-old son enjoyed his first bite of stuffed octopus. She's sailed down the fjords of Montenegro and along the coast of Borneo. And she did it all on *The World*.

"It's the most incredible way to travel—to be able to go to these far-flung places that I never could have shown my children otherwise," Robinson says. "It's been a big part of my family's lives." To be sure, there's the world—and there's *The World*. And everything in the world is elevated when you experience it aboard *The World*.

For more than 15 years, *The World* has been crisscrossing the globe, taking its well-heeled passengers on a continuous journey from one far corner to the next, from the Arctic Circle to Antarctica, from the Mediterranean to Madagascar. But make no mistake; this is no cruise—the word is all but forbidden by the ship's crew and residents alike. Rather, it's an elite club, the largest privately owned residential yacht on earth—an exclusive floating community, if you will. And the ability to access this coveted ship is highly restricted. As an Exclusive Resorts Member who first sailed *The World* in 2007, Robinson discovered a unique way to navigate the globe. "ER Members have an extraordinary opportunity to gain access to *The World* through their Memberships, as my family did," says Robinson. "It really is about the only way to experience the ship without having a personal connection to one of the existing resident owners or going through an extensive vetting process as a potential resident." To date, ER Members have taken 2,142 trips aboard *The World*, with an average 7.65 days per trip and a total 13,393 ER Days used aboard the ship.

Of course, much like a cruise ship, *The World* is a large vessel that sails from port to port. But that's where the comparison stops. There are no cramped staterooms here, no been-there-done-that itineraries, no crowded swimming pools or packed buffet lines. Each of the 165 residences on board are expansive, ranging from spacious studios to a six-bedroom penthouse (hardly the kind of quarters you'd find on even the most luxurious cruise ships), and passengers enjoy an array of un-cruise-like amenities, too. The only full-size tennis court at sea calls *The World* home, as do two swimming pools, six restaurants, seven bars, a golf simulator and putting green, a movie theater, an art gallery, a retractable marina, and a 7,000-square-foot spa and wellness center. And when *The World* is in port—which the ship often is, staying overnight at each of the roughly 100 destinations it visits every year—passengers are doing more than sightseeing: They're tracking polar bears in the Arctic, sipping Champagne among the sand dunes of Namibia, and riding camels through the Australian outback.



—  
The World features two swimming pools, six restaurants, and a 7,000-square-foot spa, and wellness center.

But, there's a catch: In order to experience *The World*, one must be a resident of *The World*. And to be a resident of *The World* requires no small arrangement: Residences only occasionally hit the market—selling for anywhere between \$2 million and \$15 million on average—and ownership is highly selective, restricted to those with at least \$10 million in assets and requiring endorsements from two existing residents.

That is, unless you're an Exclusive Resorts Member. Outside of ownership, the only way to experience *The World* is by booking your stay in one of the Club's four on-board residences, three of which feature two bedrooms, a wraparound terrace, a full kitchen, and sprawling living spaces, including a formal dining room. "It's like having a golden ticket to Willy Wonka's chocolate factory," says Robinson.

"It was a trip of a lifetime," she says of the journey, which sailed from Rome to Sardinia and Corsica, then on to Valencia, Spain, for the 2007 America's Cup. "My youngest child was 18 months old at the time, and my other two were 4 and 7. There was simply no other way I would have been able to take them on a trip like that. It truly is the greatest way to travel, especially for families."

Robinson was hooked. What she thought would be an erstwhile adventure at sea, never to be repeated again, became a near-annual event. The following year, she booked another expedition via Exclusive Resorts on *The World*, this one to the Greek Isles and Montenegro. After that it was the Northwest Passage in Alaska, then the Balearic Islands and Saint-Tropez, and then, for two weeks in 2014, an exotic tour from Jakarta to Singapore and Borneo. "I would never have convinced my husband to go to those places if it weren't on *The World*," she recalls. "All the bouncing around, checking in and out of hotels—it would have been almost impossible to replicate."

But it wasn't just the destinations that made Robinson and her family such enthusiasts of *The World*. Having sailed with both Princess Cruises and Seabourn in the past, Robinson never considered herself a cruising fan. "Normal cruise ships have nothing in common with *The World*, except they're on the water," she says. And that is exactly why *The World* impressed her. The cuisine is exceptional, she says, satisfying even the most discerning palates among her family, with a variety of cuisines from sushi to steak, as well as reliable favorites for the kids (the chocolate-chip pancakes are a must). The decor is always fresh and up-to-date—owed to dry-dock upgrades performed every three years. The in-port experiences are more immersive, too, thanks to two- and three-day stays that allow residents to explore destinations long after other cruise ships have left for their next destination. And the service? "I have never had better service anywhere in my life than on that ship," Robinson says.

So enamored with *The World* were Robinson and her family that, in 2016, they decided to purchase a home of their own on the ship—made possible via experiencing the *The World* with Exclusive Resorts. This year, the intrepid clan will once again hit the high seas for a far-flung adventure: In August, the ship will make its voyage to Norway's little-known Svalbard Archipelago—located some 600 nautical miles from the North Pole and an Arctic wonderland—where an expedition team will lead passengers on whale- and walrus-watching excursions. Still, regardless of whether the destination is Svalbard, St. Maarten, Singapore, or Santorini, Robinson insists it's the journey that makes *The World* worth taking. "Don't worry whether it's going to Venice or Mallorca or wherever else," she says. "It's not important where *The World* is going—just get on it."

## Where in the World?

This year, *The World* will sail more than 40,000 nautical miles, making stops in 120 ports across more than 30 countries, including 22 maiden ports of call. An expedition to the Svalbard Archipelago will be the highlight of the summer, allowing passengers to explore the frozen tundra and its wild inhabitants—including polar bears, Svalbard reindeer, and Arctic foxes—with a team of naturalists. Come fall, *The World* will set sail for the British Isles, followed by the Mediterranean and Canary Islands, before a cross-Atlantic jaunt (with a pit stop on the volcanic Ascension Islands) ends the year in South Africa.

Excitement is already building for the 2019 itinerary, which will include an expedition to Madagascar, as well as exotic explorations in Sri Lanka, Oman, and Israel. In the spring, it's back to the sun-soaked Mediterranean before a journey to the majestic Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland. The year will end in East and Southeast Asia, with stops in Koh Samui, Thailand; Hanoi, Vietnam; Shanghai, China; and, for a New Year's Eve celebration to remember, Hong Kong.