

SOUTH FLORIDA

OPULENCE

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Capturing the luxury lifestyle

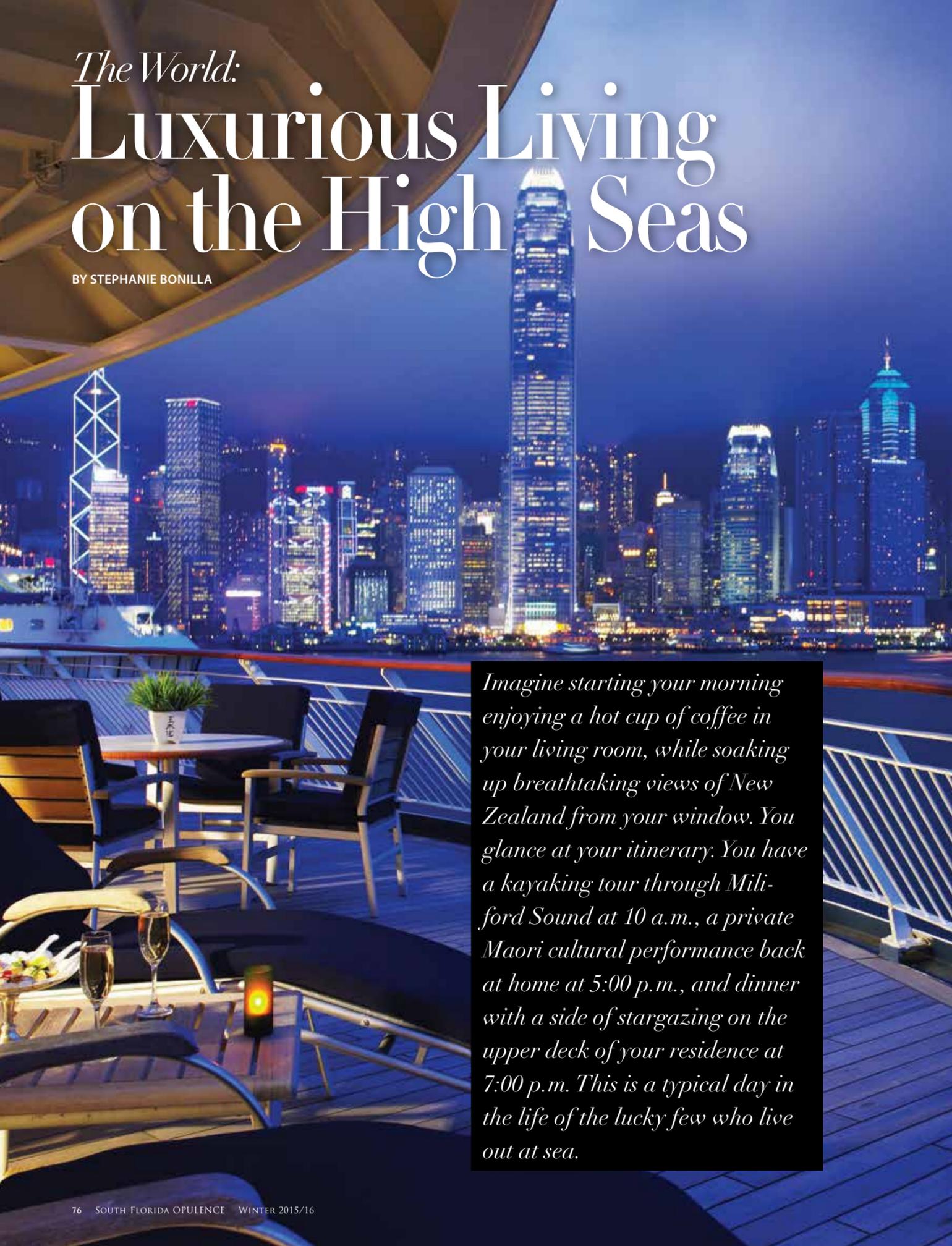
BEST IN CLASS

FROM THE FINEST IN ART, WINE, WATCHES, CIGARS & JEWELS, TO COUTURE, CUISINE, YACHTS, JETS & EXOTIC CARS, THE BEST OF THE BEST IS UNVEILED

The World:

Luxurious Living on the High Seas

BY STEPHANIE BONILLA



Imagine starting your morning enjoying a hot cup of coffee in your living room, while soaking up breathtaking views of New Zealand from your window. You glance at your itinerary. You have a kayaking tour through Milford Sound at 10 a.m., a private Maori cultural performance back at home at 5:00 p.m., and dinner with a side of stargazing on the upper deck of your residence at 7:00 p.m. This is a typical day in the life of the lucky few who live out at sea.

Without ever leaving their home, residents of *The World* can wake up in Australia, Japan, or even Antarctica. Launched in 2002, *The World* currently owns the title of the largest residential ship to sail the open ocean. With 165 private residences ranging from studios to 3 bedroom units, 6 restaurants, a state-of-the-art spa and fitness center, a full tennis court, and even its own gourmet market, this ship is fantastically decked out to the nines.

Residents of this luxury liner hail from approximately 19 nations—primarily from Canada and the United States—while 270 crew members tirelessly work to make them feel right at home. From knowing how they like their coffee to tucking residents in a Bali bed for a night of sleeping under the stars, the staff always goes above and beyond, exceeding the expectations of even the highest luxury hospitality standards. And they are delighted to do so.

The World's General Manager, Thomas Legner, understands luxury. With a wealth of experience in the hospitality world gained from years of managing high-end hotels such as the InterContinental in Vienna and the Four Seasons in Washington, D.C., Legner works closely with his team to deliver the best service money can buy. "What attracted me to *The World* was the uniqueness of the concept and the ability to 'create' something special. That is very hard to find in the hotel industry these days," said Legner, when asked why he decided to come onboard as GM.

Although not every resident lives aboard *The World* full time, there is always a sense of community. Various social gatherings are coordinated throughout the year to assist residents in getting to know their fellow travel companions and neighbors. As for the itineraries, those are determined three years in advance by the residents. Seven owners make up the committee designated to plan each year's voyage, sending out their proposed program to their fellow residents for voting.

So what's the price tag for living one of the most exclusive lifestyles imaginable? Unless you're able to buy into this elite community, you will never know. The clandestine figure is never discussed—so much so that money is never even exchanged on the ship! Rather, residents pay annual ownership costs that cover their food and beverage as well as their share of the ship's operations, maintenance and fuel.

But the best part of living on this luxury ocean liner are the National Geographic-esque adventures residents get to experience. No excursion is too demanding for those living on *The World*. From being the largest ship to traverse through the Northwest Passage to making eye contact with a polar bear, the possibilities for thrilling experiences are endless. Residents enjoy access to any destination well beyond the beaten path.

For the Edwards, a couple who recently purchased a 2-bedroom unit on the ship, life has never been better. Not only did the idea of traveling to some of the most remote places in the world entice them into making the pricey decision, but as avid wine lovers, the thought of taking their wine tasting habits to a whole new level helped seal the deal. One of their favorite experiences to date was one that trumps any wine connoisseur's wildest dream. The Edwards, along with several other residents, got to experience a private wine and port tasting and dinner at the most exclusive port house in Portugal. Not to mention that they also got to taste wine from a barrel dating back to the 1800s.

The Edwards, along with the other residents who call this ship's gangways their personal driveway, seek a transcendent life full of authentic travel and sublime experiences, living in a constant state of uninterrupted marvel. And that's exactly what you get when you purchase a little piece of *The World*. ●

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