



Privately owned residential mega yacht, *The World*

/ LUXURY VACATIONS

Inside The World, the Private Luxury Ship That Never Stops Sailing

June 18, 2026 | By Keri Bridgwater



From swimming with whale sharks in Raja Ampat to poker nights at sea, a glimpse of what daily life is really like aboard one of the most unusual addresses on Earth.

The first thing you notice about Eddie Wong is that he knows everyone. Walking the corridors of *The World* during a recent San Diego port visit, the ship's residential director rarely makes it more than a few steps without stopping to exchange greetings. One resident has just returned after several years away. Another is hosting friends for dinner. Wong remembers where he last saw them, asks after family members, and effortlessly picks up conversations that appear to have paused only yesterday. Launched in 2002, *The World* remains the first—and still only—private residential ship owned, occupied, and managed by its residents. Home to 165 residences, ranging from ocean studios to sprawling three-bedroom affairs, it has spent more than two decades circumnavigating the globe.

An Unusual Address



Residents relax on The World's marina deck

Yet what surprised most wasn't the scale of the operation but how much it felt like a community. During a whirlwind tour, Wong showed off everything from the spa and tennis court to several owner-customized residences that felt more like boutique apartments. Dinner that evening was at Marina, the ship's largest restaurant and one of its primary social hubs, hosted by residents Andrea Newman and Katherine Ott. The space itself contains a few surprises: in certain ports, the stern opens to create a marina at sea, while a swimming pool sits concealed beneath part of the restaurant floor. Alongside its six dining concepts, *The World* maintains an award-winning cellar of around 15,000 bottles representing more than 1,400 labels.



The 12th deck outdoor pool & sports bar, Quantum

Over hand-carved Ibérico ham and dangerously good truffle fries, conversation turned to what it means to call a constantly moving ship home. A former airline executive who still serves on multiple boards, Newman purchased her residence with her husband nearly a decade ago. Before moving aboard, she had one concern. “I wondered if I’d ever get my sea legs,” she says.

Nearly a decade later, Newman has visited Antarctica five times, swum with whale sharks in Indonesia, and sailed to Pitcairn Island, famed for its connection to the *Mutiny on the Bounty*. “The Drake Passage doesn’t bother me at all,” she laughs. “And places like Raja Ampat completely changed my perspective.” Europe, she admits, no longer excites her the way it once did. The appeal lies increasingly in the remote places, and that flexibility is part of the attraction.

Residents can spend as much—or as little—time aboard as they choose. Newman leaves each winter to ski from a home in Park City. Her husband, by contrast, rarely does so except when obligations require it. Other residents fly off for board meetings, spend time at second homes, or meet up with friends in destinations along the itinerary before rejoining the ship. For residents of *The World*, home is not a fixed location but a constantly evolving one.

Life at Sea – and Between Ports



The World Spa

Katherine, who rejoined The World hours before our dinner, after returning from a gorilla trek in Rwanda, described the ship as an unusually easy place to settle into. A typical day might begin with a fitness class in the gym, followed by Pilates in a dedicated studio (equipped with four reformers, although two are coming soon, and a Cadillac). Ahead of the most recent Antarctica voyage, Newman and Ott continued their regular routine of using the spa's contrast therapy facilities, including the sauna, steam room, and cold plunge.

No two days look quite the same, though. Depending on the port, residents might spend the afternoon exploring a city on their own, joining a guided expedition, or heading off on a multi-day overland journey before reconnecting with the ship elsewhere. Before each stop, the concierge team compiles a detailed printed guide covering everything from restaurant recommendations, museum and golf course listings to the farmers' markets and other local tips.



The World's Pitcairn Expedition

Newman and Ott both agree that life aboard is social when residents want it to be and private when they don't. Breakfast is often enjoyed at home; an onboard market stocks essentials, although room service remains a favorite. Evenings could involve dinner with friends, a gathering organized through one of the ship's many WhatsApp groups, or a low-stakes "ladies' poker" night.

One thing that becomes clear over dinner is that there isn't really a typical resident. Americans make up the largest contingent aboard, Andrea explains, but the community also includes Australians, Britons, and Canadians, among others. Most residents are in their 60s, though not everyone fits the mold. Two families travel with school-aged children, supported by a dedicated educational space, as they circumnavigate the globe. "You get people from all sorts of backgrounds," Newman says. "But they're curious, love to travel, and love adventure. That's the common thread.

Beyond the Usual Circuit



Relaxation awaits on a Bali Bed

Future voyages drift into the conversation. Itineraries are planned years in advance by resident committees, giving owners unusual influence over where the vessel sails next. Both ladies are particularly excited about an upcoming circumnavigation of Japan, though Newman admits the more remote destinations tend to hold the greatest appeal. Greenland's fjords, the Northwest Passage, and another Antarctica expedition are all on the docket through 2028.

After spending a few hours aboard, *The World* starts to resonate as something else entirely: a highly functional "other" space between second or third homes, one designed for people who no longer wish to choose between them. For Newman, that's ultimately the point. When she returns to Michigan and shares photographs from places like Papua New Guinea, friends often struggle to understand the appeal. She smiles. "I love it and can't imagine living any other way."

All photos courtesy of The World, Residences at Sea.



The World in Papua New Guinea