

High Seas, Higher Standards: The World Residences at Sea



By David Landis, The Gay Gourmet—

Hasn't everyone thought of travelling the world, and especially in luxury—even better, at sea?

Lately, the luxury market for oceanic cruises is booming. Brands like The Ritz-Carlton and the Four Seasons have their own specialty luxury lines.



And then there's **The World Residences at Sea**, which truly is in a class all its own.

The World describes itself as “the planet’s largest private residential yacht,” but it’s not a typical cruise ship. The vessel has 165 owner studio- to 3-bedroom apartments (plus a multi-bedroom penthouse), but there are 200 or fewer residents on the boat at any time. Owners not only own the ship, but also get to decide where in the world it will cruise.

Luxury, of course, doesn't come cheap. The World requires approximately \$10 million in assets (and two references) to be considered for ownership. Apartments are priced around \$3 million up to \$15 million; HOA dues begin around \$200k per year and are up to \$1 million per year. But what you get for that outlay is beyond every lavish expectation. Even better, you become part of The World's own community, which one staffer described aptly as a “nomadic tribe.”







A meal served on The World Residences at Sea

The Gay Gourmet was lucky enough recently to tour—and dine—aboard The World when it was anchored in San Francisco. It's a wow!

The affable Residential Director Eddie Wong lives on the boat, and was my well-informed personal guide. He took me from bow to stern and port to starboard, pointing out the many first-class attributes aboard The World.

When you enter, you feel like you're at a 5-star hotel, with soaring ceilings and a community room that hosts performances often geared to the locale that The World is visiting. While in San Francisco, members of the **San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus** performed and apparently were a big hit!

You want to feel pampered? You've come to the right place. With 300 staff, that ratio of service personnel to guests is 1.5. You never feel like anyone is hovering, but, whatever you need, they're always there to help.

The residences range from 290-square-foot studios to 3,242-square-foot, multi-bedroom apartments. All are beautifully appointed, with renovated kitchens and baths, ample storage, expansive living spaces, and outdoor decks to boot.



David Landis and The World Executive Chef Lionel Catherin
Photos by David Landis

The World boasts 6 restaurants (4 fine dining and 2 casual), two swimming pools (one indoor, one outdoor), a golf simulator, a full-service spa featuring a plethora of wellness experts, an intimate bar/lounge, a library, a sports bar, informative lectures at the yacht's own theatre, a grocery store with fresh produce and local products, and more. Plus, The World tailors bespoke service to each individual's taste.



While onboard, I met several residents and that included some LGBTQ+ folks. All were incredibly welcoming and warm. That made me understand how hospitable the community is that thrives there. You could feel the sense of belonging that the residents share.

Of course, the Gay Gourmet wanted to know about dining options. The Executive Chef aboard The World is **Lionel Catherin**. He oversees the culinary operations across the ship's multiple venues, including the fine dining Art Deco restaurant **Portraits** (which includes a staggering more than 15,000 bottles in its wine cellar), and the contemporary steakhouse **Marina**. Other dining options include casual dining at **Fredy's Deli & Cafe**, **East** (Pan Asian), and the pool grill. We opted to dine at the **Tides**, which is a Mediterranean-style restaurant with both indoor and outdoor dining. My lunch companion was an amiable resident who has lived on The World for a couple of years. She explained to me that everything is homemade, a feat when you're out at sea. That includes the baked goods—a breadbasket and breadsticks worthy of **Tartine** status—which started our meal. Our lunch was a perfect grilled shrimp salad with a tahini dressing that didn't overpower the seafood, along with a clean and crisp glass of chablis. When I asked for Louie dressing to accompany my salad, the response was, "Of course!"

My lunch pal also explained that she loves to cook onboard for her family, and any ingredient she needs is delivered to her within about a day. I'm not even sure how that's possible, but that's The World for you!

In short, and in the words of my favorite Broadway composer Stephen Sondheim, ***Take Me to The World***.