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El Aleph, the Sulawesi Pirate

Cruising in the **Seychelles**

Majesty's Push into

South East Asia

Southerly Success Story:

New Zealand's Superyacht Industry



Minesweeper turned
luxury yacht *Calisto*

RUGGED ELEGANCE

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Rugged Elegance ▶▶▶

Former mine sweeper turned luxury yacht Calisto offers a unique charter experience on the Andaman Sea.

By Sophie Lisby





The 136ft Calisto took an unconventional route into becoming a superyacht. She was built as a mine sweeper in 1944 for the US Navy but was transferred upon completion to serve the Royal British Navy. In 1954, after ten years of loyal service, Calisto changed course and became the private luxury yacht of Irish tycoon and former MP, Mr. Thomas Loel Guinness. Mr. Guinness was also the owner of La Calypso, the famed vessel of French aquatic legend Jacques Cousteau himself. Having joined such prestigious company, Calisto underwent extensive refurbishment, transforming into a beautiful tribute to old world charm and high sea exploration. While the classic lines of Calisto were borne of war, her elegance and grace set

her on course for a far more luxurious destiny. For a number of years she graced the seas of Europe, from Greece to Britain and Italy to France often chartering celebrities and politicians.

In the late 1950s, a prestigious French family purchased Calisto and maintained her for the next forty years. Today she is moored in Phuket, and is available for charter throughout South East Asia. Her French owner fell in love with her splendour and historic feel and spared no money bringing the old lady up to date. Although totally refurbished, he decided to maintain the old-fashioned feel inside the yacht and made only necessary exterior and technical changes. All hull frames and underwater teak planking were re-installed



years ago in Italy and new Caterpillar engines and gear boxes have been installed (before, the engines were started pneumatically). All electricity wiring has been installed to comply with the newest safety regulations and the yacht is also complying with international and safety regulations.

Featuring a large master stateroom, two smaller staterooms, two double cabins and two single cabins, the yacht is able to comfortably fit 12 persons. Each cabin is named after a famous destination, so passengers may spend the night in "Mumbai", "Nagoya" or "Tianjin." The cabins are individually and tastefully decorated with vibrant colours and all feature 100 per cent Egyptian cotton bed linens while bathrooms are

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fitted with Molton Brown toiletries. All cabins except one of the single cabins have private bathrooms. The salon boasts a large sofa and chairs, and with sea view bookshelves and a large rug on the floor it has a relaxed atmosphere and serves as a comfortable alternative to the outside sundecks. Throughout the interior, with its furniture and paneling and attention to detail provides an exclusive and personal feel. Dinner may be served outside in the covered dining area or inside in the dining room. A crew of seven will cater to your every need and behind the wheel house there is even a spa where a trained specialist can provide various treatments such as the famous Thai massage or a relaxing aromatic massage.

If one is looking for more adventurous activities, Calisto does not disappoint. Chartering in the entire South East Asian region, the yacht can access some of the world's most pristine archipelagos and diving destinations, and an extensive range of water toys to make close exploration possible. Onboard one will find sports equipment including a diver propulsion vehicle, kayak, water skis, jet skis, and donuts. On the upper deck there are two inflatable hard bottom dinghies with 15 horsepower and 115 horse power Yamahas to drive all the way and take passengers on small excursions.





Captain Philippe Cathala is an attentive host at the head of a seven person crew. He has more than 20 years of experience cruising South East Asian waters from Thailand to Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Andaman Islands. His knowledge of the region allows him to take passengers off the beaten track and he can tailor itineraries to fit passengers' needs. French followed a recent refit of Calisto in Thailand and he knows every detail of the yacht from engine to sundeck. Cooking up scrumptious cuisine is Chef Sowat Naknonhan, known as Khun Wat. Having worked in several hotels and restaurants in Bangkok and Vietnam, Wat is an experienced chef with a flair for international gourmet cuisine as well as his native Thai cuisine. Chief steward Puangpit Murada also known as Tukta is a 30-year-old Thai lady who is also in charge of the on-board medical facility. She holds a certificate from the Thai Ministry of Public Health and was trained at the Thai Marine School. Tukta speaks fluent English and often helps Khun Wat in the galley making traditional Thai food. Engineer Choedsak Nuanchan also known as Paad makes sure that Calisto is always fit for charter. He has been in the industry since 1987 marine engineering in the Trang province. Together with three other crew members, this attentive team brings the yacht to life and makes for a delightful stay on board.

Combining old school elegance with modern luxury, the journey is the destination on Calisto. ■