

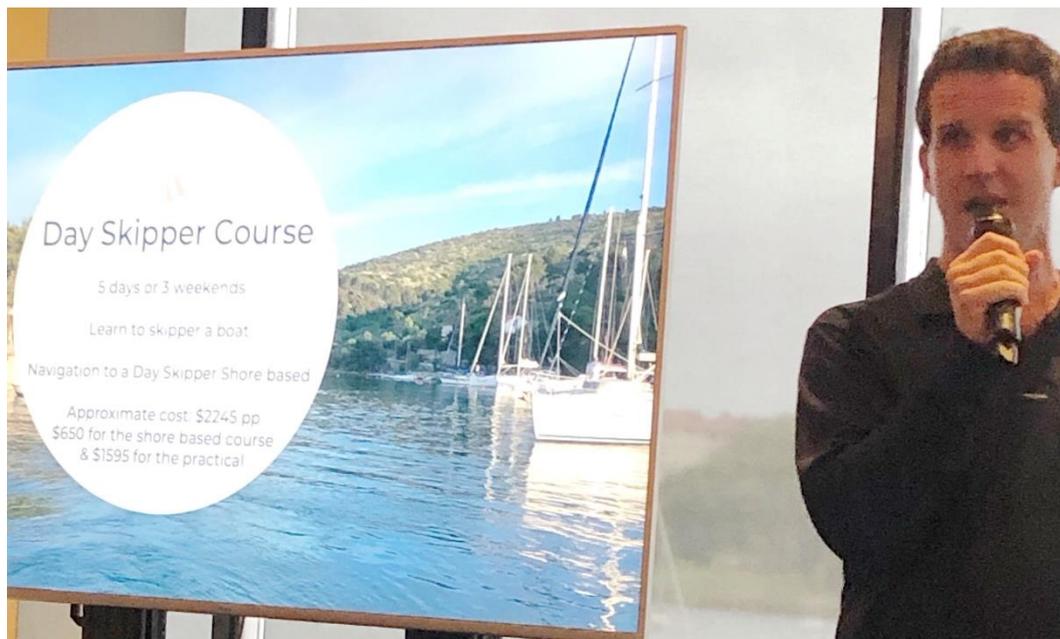
Cruising Safety and Chartering in Europe

By James Merrington

Neil Driscoll from [Above and Beyond Boating](#) addressed the Cruising Division on the requirements for chartering a yacht in Europe on 23 January.

If you would like to charter a yacht in Europe, you will need an International Certificate of Competence (ICC) which is issued by the Royal Yachting Association. Only the nominated skipper is required to have this qualification. Most European countries require this for all boats cruising in their waters, not just charter boats. A VHF operator's licence may also be required. While other countries, like the UK, might not require an ICC, the charter companies there may require one.

To qualify for an ICC, there are theory and practical components which need to be completed, requiring about five days or three weekends training. Neil recommends you organise your ICC well in advance of your trip.



Also, a Day Skipper qualification may be required in some instances.

As an aside, Neil advised that NSW is now the only state that does not require a boat licence for the skipper of sailing boats. A RMS licence would be wise for a trip to Queensland or Victoria.

Tips for a Successful Charter

- Create a list of relevant questions and requirements for the charter company.
- Ask yourself, how big does the boat need to be? Try to minimise the boat size as handling and manoeuvring is a big issue in the Mediterranean.
- Who will be the skipper?
- When to go – try not to go in August as most countries are also on holidays then leading to increased prices and great congestion.



- Provisioning – some charter companies offer a provisioning service, it is definitely worth the small surcharge to get them to do it. Alternatively, arrive the day before the charter to get organised.
- Your group might also enjoy sightseeing in the town where the charter company is located and is usually worthwhile. If you leave a day after the charter ends, the whole process becomes much less stressful.
- Ascertain all of your crew's requirements, they may be different from your plans. If possible, try to get together as a group to hear everyone's viewpoint, so that everyone gets enjoyment out of the charter.

Safety Tips

- Discuss Man Overboard procedures with all the crew, make sure everyone knows what to do.
- Upskill your crew, get your crew familiar with the boat, where the safety equipment is housed and practise using it.

Above & Beyond Boating philosophy

- Go on adventures.
- Use what you have.
- Never compromise on safety.
- Leave your comfort zone.
- Look after your boat and she'll look after you.
- Continually develop your skills.
- Keep it simple Skipper.