



21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SAILING EDUCATION

## **NauticEd Reports Sailing Charter Vacation Bookings and Education Enrollments Are Soaring**

*Global sailing educator sees 38% increase in yacht charter bookings over pre-COVID years and 30% increase in sailing course enrollment over 2020*

**AUSTIN, Texas – June 21, 2021** -- As consumer travel surges ahead on a tide of pent-up demand, NauticEd -- the leader in global sailing education and a global yacht charter agency – has reported an increase in vacation yacht bookings almost 10 times greater than 2020 and 38% greater than pre-COVID years. It is also seeing a 30% increase in online course enrollments over 2020 figures.

“During the pandemic, most travelers cautiously sheltered in place to avoid COVID-19,” said Grant Headifen, NauticEd founder and global director of education. “As travelers re-emerge, many new customers are telling us that being stuck at home inspired them to try something they’ve fantasized for years: escaping on a luxury sailboat with their family and learning how to sail. In fact, 43% of our new students surveyed said their desire was to skipper a yacht on a sailing vacation or adventure.”

NauticEd’s dramatic 38% increase in its vacation yacht bookings over pre-COVID years mirrors the overall increase in U.S. travel bookings of the past two months. Consumers, emboldened by recent CDC data that shows nearly 50% of the U.S. population has received one vaccination shot or more, are primed for adventure.

According to a survey conducted by Destination Analysts, as of Memorial Day the number of Americans concerned about contracting the coronavirus, the pandemic’s impact on personal finances, as well as the national economy hit historic lows. The percentage of those sharing the perception of travel and leisure activities as unsafe was cut in half compared to the beginning of the year. It prompted U.S. consumers to dream about travel again, and, based on NauticEd’s spike in inquiries and resulting business, it appears many dreamed about sailing.

“As a travel and outdoor recreational activity, sailing is on fire right now and the demand is the strongest we’ve seen in a decade,” said Headifen. “We are thrilled to report a fresh surge of novice sailors and newcomers are embracing the lifestyle, while the sailing faithful are enthusiastically returning to inquire about yacht charters again.”

An international leader in sailing education, NauticEd has provided over 250,000 courses, including a mix of both virtual and live instruction, since its founding in 2008. Besides the uptick in vacation yacht bookings, NauticEd’s 30% increase in online

educational course enrollments not only demonstrates a growing demand for boating and sailing education, but a new trend in how people choose to learn.

“Our strategic mix of comprehensive e-learning platforms with on-the-water instruction help students take their sailing to the next level in the most efficient and effective manner possible,” said Headifen. “We have beginners wanting to become a competent crew member, intermediate sailors looking to sharpen their skills and advanced sailors wanting to circumnavigate the globe. Our online curriculum allows them to get underway immediately in their own personalized learning process before syncing with a NauticEd accredited sailing school.”

NauticEd is the first sailing educator to receive official American National Standards recognition. Its e-learning approach allows students to gain knowledge and learn sailing theory online via multimedia instructional modules that are totally customized to meet their needs, all within the comfort of their home and from their preferred device. When NauticEd students show up at an accredited school for their on-the-water training, they already have learned the language and theory of sailing. It enables them to maximize one-on-one time with a qualified instructor while exclusively focusing on practical skills. The result for students is greater sailing competency.

A key benefit of NauticEd’s business model is its two-prong approach to the sailing experience, allowing its customers to learn, travel, charter and take vacations. Not only does it offer global yacht charter services and more than 24 comprehensive online courses, but its integrated course documentation and sailing resume provides charter companies with exactly what they need to validate a student’s actual skill level and experience.

“In my experience, boat charter companies want to see more than just a sailing school certificate,” said Headifen. “They want to rent to sailors who have demonstrable experience with similar size boats, who know how to navigate, operate and safely return their vessels back to the harbor.”

Inspired by this knowledge and insight, Headifen founded NauticEd 13 years ago with the mission to create safer, more competent sailors. He collaborated with scores of leading sailing educators, e-learning technologists, forward-thinking sailing schools and a select group of top international instructors to build NauticEd’s comprehensive curriculum.

As part of its global outreach program, NauticEd offers two free online instructional courses. For information, visit [www.nauticed.org/two-free-sailing-courses](http://www.nauticed.org/two-free-sailing-courses) or [www.nauticed.org](http://www.nauticed.org).

## **About NauticEd**

NauticEd features over 24 online sailing courses, certification for sailors at all levels, feature-rich proprietary learning management systems, and a global network of sailing school and charter affiliates. Since Grant Headifen founded NauticEd in 2008, it has provided over a quarter million sailing courses to students worldwide and currently supports over 80,000 boating enthusiasts with courses, experience building tools and charter vacations. NauticEd is the only sailing education program recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators as having met the rigorous American National Standards, and NauticEd's SLC licensing is accepted by charter companies worldwide. For more information, please visit [www.nauticed.org](http://www.nauticed.org).

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