

Regenerating Genoa

BY BRYONY MCCABE
IMAGES COURTESY OF ALBERTO CANALE // COVERPHOTO

Genoa is undergoing a period of change and is using this as an opportunity to reinvent itself as a superyacht hub, with an exciting redevelopment project gathering momentum and a number of other components that are likely to come together over the next few years. Here, The Superyacht Report visits the Italian city to meet the key players involved in its regeneration, and they reveal why the industry should be taking note.



Genoa has a proud maritime history and, with its varied superyacht offering in terms of service and infrastructure, the city has always been recognised as a destination for refit and repair. Furthermore, with numerous berthing options across Marina Genova and Marina Molo Vecchio, and a central Mediterranean location close to the airport that enables guests to land in Genoa and be in Portofino within an hour, it's a convenient stopover for yachts picking up or dropping off charters. However, despite Genoa's position as an already bustling centre of superyacht activity, the city and waterfront area lacks the same energy and allure of other popular year-round destinations, meaning there is still room for development to allow it to compete on the same level as other yachting hubs worldwide.

Now, in an ambitious investment plan, the local administration is re-developing strategic areas of the city and this has the potential to change the way Genoa is regarded as a superyacht destination. At the same time, the local yachting sector is proactively working together to develop its offering and major infrastructural developments are underway, ensuring Genoa will be set up to cater for the large superyacht market for generations to come. The local government and yachting sector truly believe Genoa has the potential to transform itself into one of the major superyacht hubs in the Mediterranean, if not worldwide, and these changes will be the catalyst for its regeneration. We went to the city at the beginning of this transformation to find out what factors will be pivotal in shaping Genoa's evolution.

Genova for Yachting

The recently formed local-yachting association Genova for Yachting already comprises 33 nautical companies based in Genoa, all active in the service, marina, shipyard and technology sectors, with the aim of strengthening the city's superyacht offering and transforming it into a leading superyacht hub. To achieve this, Genova for Yachting wants to create new infrastructure for yachting activities and services as well as improve existing ones, increase the compatibility of the superyacht sector and the rest of the industrial port, improve accessibility and communication between the port

and the city, enhance its hospitality offering for the yachting community and establish training schemes for future generations of yachting professionals.

A major part of Genova for Yachting's strategy to attain its goals has been initiating dialogue with the local port authority and city administration. The association's president Giovanni Costaguta, commercial manager for Yachtline Arredomare 1618 S.p.A., is hoping for ongoing cooperation from the Western Ligurian Sea Port Authority and the municipality. "Intense international competition leaves space for uncertainty and the time factor is critical," he says. "Youth training and the training of operators and the creation of suitable infrastructures are the challenges for our future. Regarding these issues, we want to improve our dialogue with the city and port institutions so that they understand the necessities of the superyacht industry and how important it actually is to Genoa, so as to best exploit the extraordinary opportunities available at the moment."

In fact, this dialogue has already begun. As the administration in Genoa has signalled its intent to galvanise change across the city, it has also shown a recognition of the yachting industry's value to the local economy and wants to keep Genova for Yachting at the forefront of some of the relevant developments.

Left to right: Alberto Amico, Mayor of Genoa Marco Bucci and Genova for Yachting's Giovanni Costaguta.



“Superyachts are the final product of a complex supply chain that requires high-level professionals and guarantees quality employment opportunities. Consequently, it is a strategic segment for the region that must be followed closely.”

“The presence and the activities of associations like this are revealing themselves to be fundamental to allow us to keep our fingers on the pulse of what is happening in the sector,” explains Giovanni Toti, president of Liguria. “It is important for public administrators to be able to rapidly understand which direction businessmen are moving in and what they are thinking of investing in. Superyachts are the final product of a complex supply chain that requires high-level professionals and guarantees quality employment opportunities. Consequently, it is a strategic segment for the region that must be followed closely.”

Toti adds, “Yachting and Liguria have an almost symbiotic relationship, from the boat show to the shipyards that are found in the La Spezia area. There is a lot of history but in these last few years, after a period of poor politics and lacklustre business performance, double-digit growth has returned. The market outlook for the coming decades is thrilling. We will not allow Liguria to fall behind. [The superyacht industry] must be at the centre of precise development strategies – strategies that will look at the entire Ligurian port and shipyard system.”

Costaguta will also be making sure Genova for Yachting has a voice in the planning of the investment projects around the city so that the needs of the yachting sector are taken into consideration. This willingness to involve the yachting sector in such discussions comes from the positive attitude of the new government and mayor, who is particularly pro-yachting,

recognising the yachting sector’s importance to the economy of the city and sharing the vision for Genoa to become a leading superyacht hub.

A new vision for Genoa

While the Morandi Bridge collapse in 2018 dealt a damaging blow to Genoa’s reputation on the world stage, the government’s response in the wake of the incident has given confidence for the future of the city. As well as quickly building replacement roads to ensure minimal disruption for residents and visitors, a previously stagnant investment plan was set in motion to fund the recovery and development of the city and make it better connected than ever before.

Of most importance to the yachting sector is the plan to develop the Genoa East Waterfront, due to take place from 2019 to 2022. Internationally renowned local architect Renzo Piano has drawn up an outline design called Waterfront di Levante with the aim of restoring a view of the sea to the city, linking the two sides of the port, establishing dedicated areas for recreational and nautical activities as well as building up real estate around the waterfront.

The development of Waterfront di Levante will be crucial to any further growth of the yachting sector because the current disconnect between the city and the waterfront is a clear barrier. The redevelopment of the Porto Antico area in 1992 was the first time that the city could actually reach the waterfront. It had previously been restricted by the large industrial area that lies between the two, but the now somewhat dilapidated



Helidecks
www.helidecks.co.uk


Helideck Team Training

Design & Build Advice

Aviation ISM

Operational Support





Over 6,000 maritime courses in your pocket...

Save time and money searching by date, location and price.

yotspot.com
yachting opportunities & training

Qualified - Experienced - Responsive

When experience matters trust Safeguard Helideck Certification (SHC) for all your Helideck needs

- Design Stage
- Build
- Day-to-Day Operations
- Re-Fitting and Modifications
- Deck Friction Tests
- HLAIRs (Helicopter Landing Area Inspection Reports)

We support Superyacht Helidecks and Commercial Shipping Platforms worldwide

We are a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Aviation Inspection Body (AIB) and licensed to issue Helicopter Landing Area Certificates (HLAC) with respect to the Red Ensign Group Yacht Code, CAP 437 and the ICAO Code (Aerodromes Vol II - Heliports)

www.helideckcertification.co.uk
Call: +44 (0)1326 317323 / 07779 606589



*Top: Visiting the Mercato Orientale, Genova.
Below: Stefano Belgrano from Tonissi Meccanica Generale srl, one of the members of Genova for Yachting located in the Porto Antico area.*

Genoa East Waterfront will be restored and made part of the city again. The development will include an exhibition centre, retail areas, hotels, real estate with apartments for crew, a new marina with more than 2,000 berths and an easy connection with the downtown area. All this should contribute to transforming Genoa into the superyacht hub it wants to become.

Spearheading the development is Marco Bucci, the Mayor of Genoa, who reveals that the project is expected to cost €450 million, with €25 million coming from public funds and a large sum of private investment already secured. The demolition of the former NIRA building has already begun, as has the excavation of the main channel and improvements to the neighbouring road system. “The waterfront project is going to help a lot from a yachting standpoint,” says Bucci during a meeting at his offices in Genoa’s historic centre. “If you have this kind of economy, you need to ensure there is a synergy between the residents, the people that are working in the industry and the tourists. This connective ground around the industry will be very important for its development and success.”

It’s evident that Bucci’s proactive mindset will play a critical role in ensuring that improvements to the yachting sector, and to Genoa in general, are realised. He has big ambitions to develop the city’s nautical activities – which he refers to as the ‘blue economy’ – and turn Genoa into the capital of yachting within two to three years.

“We have all the key pillars in Genoa that are necessary to become the best city in the world and the centre of excellence for yachting,” adds Bucci. “We have the nautical background in terms of technology, experience and people, the location and high-tech network and shipyards to create the



poles of the industry. We have to work hard because nothing is a given, but we have the potential and all the elements to be a success.”

However, Bucci does acknowledge that some areas have to be considerably improved before this can happen. “One area is networking. We need to learn how to work together,” he says. “Sometimes there are frictions between the people here due to the Genoese heritage and mentality, and we need to understand how to work together. The public administration also needs to play a part in supporting that. We haven’t been doing it for the last 30 years but we are doing it right now. So the administration is doing its best but the mindset has to be shared by all the city.”

Infrastructure potential

Amico & Co, the renowned refit facility located in the Genoa East area of the port, is undertaking major infrastructural developments that will improve its existing offering to the large-yacht market. Most notably, this expansion includes the construction of a 4,000-tonne shiplift capable of hoisting super-

yachts of around 95m in length, and this is scheduled to be operational by this autumn. The lift will be capable of transferring yachts to five on-hard slots without any interference between the different slots.

The existing three open on-the-hard slots, plus the six refit sheds for yachts up to 60m and the 835-tonne travel lift, will continue to be operational. The two covered dry docks will benefit from improvements to create a more efficient service for yachts between 90 and 100m. Further open dry-dock solutions up to 200m will enable Amico to cater for almost every range of superyacht and type of refit. Work has also started on a new marina in the eastern part of the yard, next to the Genoa East Waterfront development, to accommodate super-yachts up to 110m. This will also include a new area for crew facilities and recreational activities.

Genoa is already a strong proposition in terms of superyacht berthing with Marina Genova, located next to the airport, catering for yachts up to 130m and Marina Molo Vecchio in the Porto Antico area catering for yachts up to

The layout of Amico & Co's facilities including all new infrastructure. Included in this image is the Genoa East Waterfront area that the city plans to develop.



/// Your partner
in recruitment



We understand
the mechanics of team building



+33 (0)4 92 904 610 - info@ypicrew.com - www.ypicrew.com

MLC 2006 compliant - Lloyds Register and Direction des Affaires Maritimes

From great training to great careers

UKSA is one of the top providers of MCA large yacht courses in the yachting world. We offer training from entry level right the way through to Master 3000gt.

Based in Cowes, Isle of Wight, we're easily accessible from Bournemouth, Southampton and London airports, with transport links arriving at either Portsmouth or Southampton ferry terminals. Food and accommodation come as standard with everything you need on our vibrant 3.5 acre site.

Come and train with our highly skilled industry experts from the Royal Navy, Merchant Navy and Superyacht sectors. Authorities who will share their skills and expertise with you as you study.

- STCW Training
- STCW Security Training
- Engineering Training
- Efficient Deck Hand
- Master (Coded Vessels less than 200gt) / Officer of the Watch (Yachts less than 500gt)
- Officer of the Watch (Yachts less than 3000gt)
- Chief Mate (Yachts less than 3000gt)
- Master (Yachts less than 500gt / 3000gt)

We also offer a variety of Superyacht Crew Training programmes.

“ I am personally passionate about ensuring the superyacht sector receives good quality and appropriate training to make life at sea safer ”

Captain Bill Tate,
Head of Maritime Training at UKSA

See us at
the Monaco
Yacht Show



All inclusive

150m, and the city is sure to attract more yachts as demand increases for berths over certain sizes. In fact, the marinas are already reporting an increase in the number of yachts stopping over in Genoa.

“The Northern Mediterranean remains the most coveted destination for yachts,” says Marina Genova’s CEO Giuseppe Pappalardo. “Genoa, in the heart of the ‘luxury triangle’ between Portofino, Porto Cervo and St Tropez, offers incomparable logistics and technical services, and unique and authentic touristic experiences.”

Genoa’s superyacht infrastructure complements the already well-established service and supply network in and around the city, and this has been built up from its background in naval repair. By simply wandering around the industrial area in Porto Antico, superyacht crew can find an abundance of companies to cater for almost any technical request. Furthermore, with the Italian new-build market thriving, there is a wealth of resources to draw upon throughout the rest of the country. This deep-seated culture and local resources will be key to Genoa becoming a superyacht hub and the local yachting community believes they will be the foundation of its future success.

“The number of key elements, including infrastructure, skills and human resources, that a destination needs to be successful in this market is impressive and cannot easily be achieved,” says Alberto Amico, founder and chairman of Amico & Co. “Genoa has all the ingredients for an ambitious

and unique proposition in this respect. Next year, the yard’s developments will be complete, then the waterfront area will need to be developed and at the same time all the local yachting companies will need to grow. If we can get all this accomplished in a reasonable timeframe, we think we can do really well.”

Once all infrastructural developments have been completed, together with its existing infrastructure, Genoa will certainly be comparable to nearby superyacht hubs in terms of its berthing, service and supply capabilities. This will, of course, be the cornerstone of its potential as a superyacht hub. However, there is another important element vital to its growth that the local yachting sector is only just starting to recognise – and that is appealing to the captains and crew.

Appealing to the crew

In order to attract yachts during downtime in the winter or between charters, not only does a destination have to offer competitive prices and provide high-quality service and support facilities, it also has to ensure yacht crews actually want to stay in the area for up to four or five months. This is perhaps one of Genoa’s biggest challenges because the city’s allure is not currently on the same level as the likes of Barcelona or the South of France. Yet while the local community might admit that many crews arrive in Genoa with negative preconceptions, there is usually a change in attitude once they experience the city and the surrounding region.

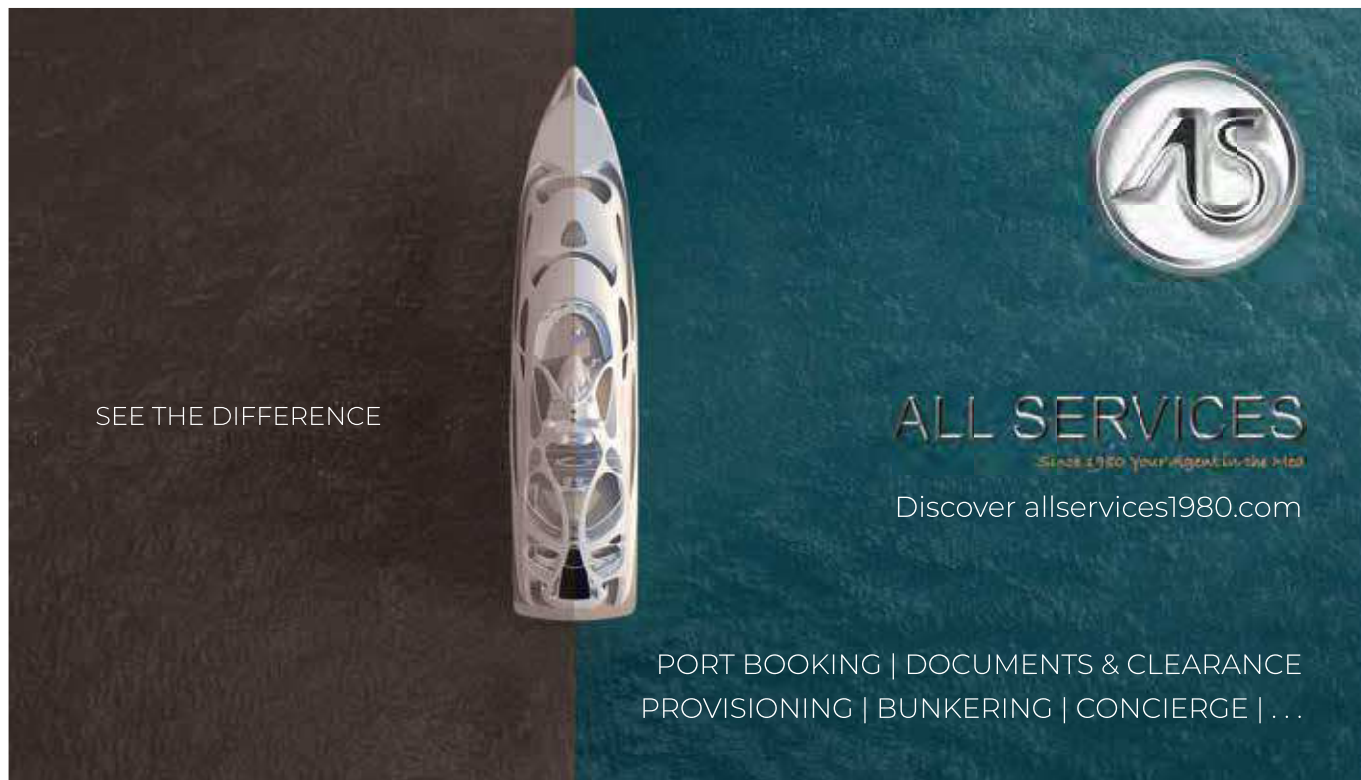
“Next year, the yard’s developments will be complete, then the waterfront area will need to be developed and at the same time all the local yachting companies will need to grow.”

GENOA STATISTICS

	30-50m	Over 50m	Max LOA
Berths*	100	60	150m
Technical berths	25	40	370m
Dry docks	–	9	267m
Slots on hard	30	15	120m
Painting slots in sheds	7	10	120m

*Figure includes the new marina managed by Amico

ADVERTISING



SEE THE DIFFERENCE

ALL SERVICES
Since 1980 your agent in the yachting world

Discover allservices1980.com

PORT BOOKING | DOCUMENTS & CLEARANCE
PROVISIONING | BUNKERING | CONCIERGE | ...

ADVERTISING



EXPERIENCE MATTERS
Navigate the tabular icebergs in Antarctica's Weddell Sea.
Witness Papua New Guinea's ancient Baining Fire Dance.
Track polar bear cubs across endless sea ice at 80° North.

EYOS
EXPEDITIONS www.eyos.com

Expedition Support • Superyacht Guides • Ice Pilots • Voyage Planning
Dive Guides • Submersible Operations • Expedition Yacht Charter



Marina Molo Vecchio.

Amico & Co has recognised the importance of looking after crew and recently focused on offering concierge services, with two initiatives having been created to make a refit at the yard a smoother experience for crews. Firstly, an Amico shuttle service now runs between the shipyard, dry docks and the city centre – making it easier for crews to return to their rented accommodation, frequent sport facilities and enjoy the nightlife in the vibrant city centre. Secondly, ‘The Italian Experience’, a hospitality project by Amico & Co and yacht and ship agent Pesto Sea Group, allows crews to make the most of Italian culture, with Genoa as the starting point either for local hospitality adventures or team-building excursions.

Marina Genova also works with crews to make sure their stays are as memorable as possible, with dedicated crew facilities on site and a crew social manager available to assist in planning their free time, creating social events and offering valuable insights into Genoa and the surrounding region.

Conclusion

When one takes into account the growth of the superyacht fleet in terms of numbers and LOA, Genoa’s future is certainly exciting for the industry. Much progress still needs to be made, but with Amico’s investment already well advanced, and if the local government keeps its promises to support the yachting sector with ongoing collaboration and investment projects – particularly the development of the waterfront – it’s entirely possible that a new-look Genoa could become one of a handful of key superyacht hubs in the Mediterranean, offering service, supply and berthing to the larger superyacht market.

On its current trajectory, it may take more than a just a few years to change the industry’s perception of Genoa. However, if the city’s yachting community can offer competitive prices and appeal to crew, then its local workforce and skill set, combined with Italian new-build activity nearby, should give it the edge to become an interesting proposition as a major superyacht hub. **BM**