



Swirl Harbour

During the Boat fest last week, we took **Monica Pawar** for a spin on a luxury yacht

How many times, while walking on the lamp post-dotted stretch from the Gateway towards Radio Club, have you ogled at the numerous luxury boats docked at the harbour? With the Mumbai International Boat fest coming up, I wrote to *Mumbai Mirror* for a ride in one of the swanky machines (since I don't personally know the Mallyas and Ambanis who own them). Soon, if not with the above czars, I was cruising with a Mahindra CEO in one of his babies!

With the boat fest on, the deck facing the Taj wore a red carpet, with numerous luxury yachts lined up. I was ushered into the exclusive space and soon found myself staring at the *Mahindra Odyssey*, a chic, 33-foot yacht. I couldn't stop admiring its interiors - leather seats, a swish sun deck, even a loo and bar. I made a mental note of how I'll earn the Rs 50 lakh or so to buy it. Just then, we

revved up and began taxiing towards the Arabian sea, passing luxury yachts and the Elephanta ferries. My snob appeal just got a shot in the arm.

The moments thereafter were something I'll narrate to my grandchildren. Our yacht accelerated seamlessly and we were soon soaring into the ocean at an astonishing speed. Gateway and its surroundings began shrinking behind me and before I could exclaim 'what a ride', we were well into the waters where larger vessels had docked. The scene on the *Odyssey* was thus: I was at the rear, clutching to the sides of my seat. A couple of others were standing ahead, also holding on for dear life, while our captain smiled behind the wheel.

Then, my already pumping adrenaline reached a crescendo as we took a sharp, almost 90-degree turn. At 35 knots per hour (the yacht can touch a maximum of 40), I was genuinely sur-

prised how even a droplet of water didn't touch us during or after the swerve. Stabilising a bit after that, I mustered up the gumption to walk over to the front deck of the boat (a sound decision). Standing up front in the yacht, I had my Columbus moment soaring back towards the harbour at a wave-crushing pace.

We reached the mainland with my mind still racing after the 20-minute exhilarating ride. Then, maybe as it was simply my day, the organisers agreed to take me for another spin, this time in a 22-footer. Now on, I'll never walk on the Gateway stretch without a smile on my face.

-AS TOLD TO MALAY DESAI

Got a dream?

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Monica's darling: Our reader lounges on the deck of the luxury yacht