

DESTINATIONS

CRUISE | TRADEWIND VOYAGES

Q&A

MARIUSZ SZALEK CAPTAIN, GOLDEN HORIZON

INTERVIEW BY Harry Kemble

Q. How did you come to work for Tradewind Voyages?

A. I was at home in Poland on holiday. Then about two months ago, I got the call that Tradewind Voyages would be operating the *Golden Horizon* vessel and asked if I would like to be captain. They knew about my sailing experience – I've been in this industry sailing ships since 2006 and have been on the biggest sailing vessels in the world – but the question was about my availability. I am very interested in sailing ships, so I knew the *Golden Horizon* and I felt honoured. The square-rigged ship is the tallest ever built and is a replica of [sailing ship] *France II*, but a bit bigger. I then sailed *Golden Horizon* from Croatia through the Bay of Biscay to the UK.

Q. Every day is different in your position, but can you run us through a normal day?

A. A workday depends on where we are. I wake up at around 6am and first go to the bridge where I check what the situation is, what the weather is like and how everything is going. I ask about the night that has passed. There's a daily meeting with the heads of departments and we carry out any maintenance on the ship. We can then plan the day. There's also a small inspection of the vessel. There's a huge amount of equipment on board so we must be sure that everything is working and in perfect condition. After that, it's time for lunch, and if we have guests on board, we will meet them then. At 10pm, I am back on the



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bridge, giving orders and checking the position. We might need to set some sails and adjust for the night.

Q. What do you love most about sailing vessels like *Golden Horizon*?

A. There's this feeling you get when you have a big ship and you're under the sails and you know that only the wind is pushing you. You can really enjoy the moment and feel the vessel speeding up. This is something that you cannot find anywhere else. You have the breeze, the wind, the salt – you can feel the salt when you sail across the Atlantic. At home, usually I do small racing boats just for fun and nothing else. Everything with sails is on my to-do list.



PICTURE: Joseph Thompson Photography

TOP TIP

Tradewind Voyages has put its winter Caribbean voyages on sale, operating 21 departures between November 11 and March 31, 2022, to islands including Tobago, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Martinique, Bequia and Guadeloupe.

Q. Where else have you worked since starting in the industry?

A. I've worked on Sea Cloud Cruises' sailing ships, and also for Star Clippers, which is the biggest line in this market with three ships. I've sailed on them all. It's a very small market, very niche.

Q. What challenges have you overcome on this vessel?

A. We have slightly fewer problems caused by the pandemic than other ships because we have more open space. Customers are tested before they come on board. Inside, we have sanitisation protocols and a lot of fresh air everywhere, which helps a lot. You cannot be as free in public spaces like the library,

so Covid-19 has made our lives a bit more complicated.

Q. What have been your highlights so far?

A. The area that we're sailing in right now [the English Channel]. It's hard for a ship of this size. It's difficult to open the wings, so to speak, because everything is very close and it's a restricted area. The best place in this region is the Isle of Wight. For me, the best area in the world is the South Pacific. You have beautiful nature, weather, history and great distances to travel. You can open the sails and sail for days. The small islands are really not touched by humans so it's the place where this kind of ship will go. **TW**