Schooner Mary Day

Come experience the rugged coast of Maine in all its spectacular beauty aboard a stunning traditional schooner.
Instead of beginning the day with the jolt of an alarm clock, you’ll awaken to the aroma of fresh-baked bread, or the ancient call of a loon. Instead of searching for a parking spot, you’ll be looking for porpoises, eagles, and seals as we sail among rugged granite islands studded with spruce trees. Take a turn at the wheel of our 96-ton schooner, help raise and trim the massive canvas sails, or curl up on our spacious cabin houses with a good book and just relax. We’ll anchor every afternoon, and go ashore in some quaint little harbor well off the beaten path. After dinner, we’ll watch the stars come out or the moon rise over the mountains of Acadia National Park.

This really is what it’s like to be on board this legendary windjammer. If you’re willing to leave your cares behind, come join us for a most extraordinary sailing adventure unlike any other vacation you could choose. It’s a wonderful way to escape the complexities and pressures of our hurry-up world and reconnect with yourself, others on board, and nature.
Every day brings a new adventure. One day we might sail the livelong day across the bay to an outpost island, and the next we might slip through a tight little tickle to visit an old fort or a stalwart lighthouse. When we raise the anchor in the morning, we often don’t know where we’ll be spending that night — it depends on which way and how strong the wind blows. There are hundreds of special anchorages, many of which we know and many yet for us to discover. Wherever we drop the hook, it’ll be a snug harbor where the evening is illuminated by starlight or perhaps blanketed in a soft fog, with only murmurs of nature and water lapping a nearby island to lull us to sleep.

On the last day of our cruise, we return to Camden before noon. Our homeport, tucked between the mountains and the sea, is a picturesque jewel, so do plan to spend a little time exploring it before or after your cruise.

“It’s wonderful to just sit back and breathe deeply and skim along the water silently. All three of the folks I coaxed into coming have thanked me profusely.”

— Marty, Washington, DC

Join the Family

When you step aboard, it’s as though we’re welcoming you to our family. Indeed, more than half of our passengers feel so much at home that they return to cruise with us again. It’s truly the people we meet who make this life so worthwhile for us. When we say our good-byes at the end of each cruise, we always feel touched by the joy and friendship we’ve experienced during the week and hope to continue these new-found friendships for many years to come.

In addition to being fully licensed captains, we both hold degrees in experiential environmental education. That’s a little bit of a mouthful, but all it means is that we believe in getting out there and experiencing the amazing natural world up close. You don’t have to be a sailor, a buff athlete, or a rugged outdoorsman. All you need is an enthusiasm for nature, a sense of adventure, and a willingness to go wherever the wind takes us.
Named for a wonderful lady whose husband was her designer and first captain, Mary Day has a distinguished history. When she was launched in 1962, she became the first commercial sailing passenger vessel built in the twentieth century and the first coasting schooner ever designed especially for windjammer vacations, with the comfort and safety of guests (not the stowage of cargo) the top priority. Her rugged construction, graceful lines, swiftness, exceptional roominess, and hospitality have made her a legend in her own time, beloved by passengers and marine professionals alike.

Mary Day’s 90-foot deck length and 23-foot beam mean there’s plenty of space for everyone. Sure and stable, she doesn’t roll like a motor vessel, so there is very little likelihood of seasickness.

With her sleek hull and 5200 square feet of sail, Mary Day hums along at ten knots or better when the wind pipes up. She certainly holds her own in the annual Great Schooner Race. With no inboard engine, it’s the sounds of the wind in the rigging, the waves surging against the islands, and the water rushing past the hull that create our traveling music. When the winds fail, we get a push from Arno, our trusty yawlboat carried on the stern. At day’s end, the centerboard, easily hauled up in shallower waters, allows us to gunkhole into anchorages that are off-limits to deep-draft keel boats.
Relax, Learn, Enjoy

What will you do aboard Mary Day? You can learn some coastwise navigation, help trim the sails, take a trick at the wheel, read a book, or simply nap in the sun. You’ll find yourself grabbing the binoculars for close-up looks at lighthouses, seals, beautiful wooden boats, a raft of eider ducks in the surf, or a bald eagle atop a crooked tree.

After we arrive at our anchorage each evening, there’s time to explore. Take one of the peapod rowing boats and poke about in the shallows, go for a run or hike along the shore, or take an invigorating swim in the “pool.” Following a hearty dinner, we often gather by the fire for some impromptu sea chanteys accompanied by whatever assortment of instruments we have aboard that week. Before bed, you’ll want to go on deck and gaze at the canopy of stars overhead. Out here, where no city lights interfere, you can truly sense the three-dimensional richness of the universe.

“No experience on the water can surpass the magnificence of being on the deck of Mary Day, her sails filled. I find joy in simple things like helping to tack the ship.… My spirit is lifted by the sight and sounds of eagles, loons, dolphins, seals, and wildlife I can’t name.”

— Ed, Alabama
THE MAIN SALOON is large and welcoming and offers several sitting areas. There’s a parlor organ for entertainment, and a fireplace to add to the cozy atmosphere. The gentle rise of the saloon staircase makes going up on deck especially easy. Just forward is the galley, where you’re always welcome to take a peek at what’s cooking, or even roll up your sleeves and help peel potatoes or knead the bread dough.

New guests always ask about the cabins and what to bring. You can tour the entire vessel online at our website. Remember this is an historic schooner — not a cruise ship. Cabins 1 through 4 have double beds. Cabins 5 and 6 each have 3 single bunks. Cabins 7, 8, 11, and 12 have bunk beds. Cabins 9 and 10 have head-to-head single bunks. We also have two private single cabins just off the main saloon. The two heads, one with a hot shower, are on deck, and the crew keeps them immaculate.

• All cabins have a window, fresh-water sink, crisp sheets, soft towels, warm-air heat, woolen blankets, and comforters.
• Cabins 1 through 12 have an opening skylight.
• All cabins have maximum headroom, light, and air.
Folks new to the windjamming experience usually wonder what they should bring. Pack in soft-sided collapsible duffle bags, and bring comfortable clothes: long pants, shorts, rubber-soled shoes, rain gear, a sweater, and a windbreaker. We recommend dressing in layers for Maine’s variable weather. Bring a swimsuit, too, for sunning on deck or swimming. If you play a musical instrument, please bring it. Bring your camera, of course, binoculars, and maybe a sketchbook or journal for your creative inspirations.

**Galley Goodies**

The combination of sun, salt air, and sailing brings on big appetites. Having witnessed this phenomenon for years, we’re well prepared to handle it. Our galley serves generous helpings of such old-fashioned favorites as Thanksgiving turkey with all the trimmings, New England ham dinner, plenty of salads and fresh vegetables, pancakes, muffins, savory chowders and soups, and even hand-cranked ice cream— all made from scratch and served in generous portions. All of our breads and desserts, including cakes, brownies, chocolate chip cookies, and pies brimming with fresh fruits, come straight from the woodstove. And of course every cruise includes our famous all-you-can-eat lobster feast cooked on a secluded beach over a fire.

“Everything was top notch and very accommodating. The food was superb.”

— George, Massachusetts
Captain Barry King and Captain Jennifer Martin

We are both Coast Guard licensed masters and have extensive sailing and educational backgrounds.

In addition to many years of experience as mate and then captain aboard Mary Day, Barry has worked on a variety of other vessels, from tugboats to square riggers. He has voyaged from the Caribbean to the Canadian Maritimes and Newfoundland, and from Bermuda to the U.S. Gulf Coast. Barry is also a Registered Maine Guide and a Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician. Jen’s sailing career took her to Florida and the Bahamas before she became captain of Figaro IV, a classic ocean racing yacht, here on the Maine coast. She is a certified Wilderness First Responder.

We met as students with the Audubon Society’s Expedition Institute while earning master’s degrees in experiential environmental education. This program gave us in-depth knowledge of a diversity of human and natural communities ranging from a sub-Arctic fishing village in Labrador to the Native American desert Southwest.

We were married aboard Mary Day and live year round here in Maine with our children, Sawyer and Courtney. All four of us have an enthusiasm for people, the wilderness, and beautiful traditional sailing vessels. We’d love for you to come share with us the ocean breezes, salt spray, vibrant sunsets, and the endless bounty of nature here on the coast of Maine.