

CRUISE GLOBALLY CHARTER LOCALLY

Burgess' Asia team is excited about new additions to the company's globetrotting charter fleet, while some established favourites in the region are planning journeys around Asia-Pacific including New Zealand for the 36th America's Cup.

WORDS NICK HUNG PHOTOS C/O BURGESS

With the gradual revival of yachting activity around the world, Burgess' Asia operation – marking its fifth anniversary this year – is excited to have a new Dutch-built addition to the company's charter central agency fleet. *Lind*, an Asian-owned 52.3m Amels, is chartering through Burgess in the Mediterranean this summer for a weekly rate from US\$259,000, having left the Damen yard in Vlissingen in May following a 10-year Lloyd's survey and a refit.

The refit included a full paint job, an interior refresh and technical maintenance, according to Captain Jonathan Kielty, who has been with *Lind* since 2014 and is now working for his third owner of the yacht, formerly named *Bel Abri*, *Belle Aimee* then *April*.

The Amels Limited Editions model has an exterior by Englishman Tim Heywood and an interior by Italian Laura Sessa, and can accommodate 11

guests in five cabins, including a vast main-deck master suite.

James Tsui, a Hong Kong-based Charter Manager and Broker for Burgess, says *Lind* could return to Southeast Asia by the end of the year, having previously spent time in the region.

"The owner is keen to do two charter seasons each year, so the Mediterranean followed by either Asia or the Caribbean," says Tsui, who has spent a decade in the superyacht industry and joined Burgess in 2016 as one of the first hires by Singapore-based Jean-Marc Poullet, Burgess' Chairman, Asia.

Lind's features include a fantastic 20m sun deck with an aft outdoor cinema, an enclosed gym and a large spa pool forward. Burgess is offering a fully refundable free cancellation for any reason up to 21 days before the start of any charter booking on *Lind* in the Med this summer.

Lady E is another Amels build that has spent a lot of time in Asia and is currently undergoing a refit plus an extension. Formerly 68.5m, the six-cabin yacht is being extended to 74.5m at British shipyard Pendennis.

Current plans for the Burgess CA, which will charter from US\$595,000 per week, include arriving in Australia by December and then heading across to New Zealand for the 36th America's Cup before spending next summer in French Polynesia.

Other Burgess superyachts of interest include the 60m CRN *Ramble on Rose* (from US\$375,000/week) which was still in Australia in early July, with plans including time in Singapore in November before she



Burgess' James Tsui, a Hong Kong-based Charter Manager and Broker

heads north to Phuket again for the winter charter season.

The new 55m Amels 180 *Papa* (from US\$315,000/week) spent her first summer in the Mediterranean last year and this year has been chartering in Thailand. Located in Singapore in July, the five-cabin yacht is set to spend more time in Asia-Pacific including Fiji and Australia.

GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Such globetrotting yachts – whose cruising destinations can change, often depending on charter bookings – complement a fleet of Burgess superyachts resident in Asia. Because the company's clients in Asia charter all around the world, the regional team stays in regular contact with its multiple offices in Europe and North America.



The 52.3m Lind (pictured in Raja Ampat) could return to Southeast Asia this winter, fresh from a refit in the Netherlands

Due to the teamwork approach of the global brokerage house, Tsui works closely with Gaye Joyeau-Bourgeois, a Charter Director for Burgess and a liaison for its Asia charter operation

Tsui says the company benefits from its focus on 'glocal' knowledge, the combination of local knowledge with regular communication and information sharing between its offices around the world.

"Knowledge sharing within the team is amazing. If a client in Asia asks about a certain yacht in the Bahamas and I haven't been on it, I can call a Burgess colleague in the New York or Miami office and get their honest feedback," says Tsui, who also worked for a superyacht-management firm and as an owner's representative before joining Burgess.

"If we hear of anything that may make a yacht unsuitable for our client, we won't recommend it. They appreciate our honesty.

"One of the key success factors is how Burgess works as a team. I often hear of other companies' brokers in Asia being left alone, getting little support, so they rely very much on their own knowledge, which limits what they can offer the client."

CLIENT KNOWLEDGE

Tsui says most of Burgess' charter clients in Asia come from Singapore, Hong Kong and mainland China. Although charter trips in the Mediterranean are typically a minimum of a week, he says clients in Asia may only book for three to five days when booking trips in this region, as the shorter flights are suitable for shorter holiday periods or long weekends.

About two-thirds of Burgess' charter bookings in Asia are by repeat clients, while referrals from such clients account for the majority of first-time clients.

"It's like most people are with family holidays. Once you do it and you like it, you're likely to want to repeat the experience and do it next year," says Tsui, who speaks English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

Tsui says many clients choose the same yacht they chartered before, as selecting the right yacht in the first place is a detailed process. Clients may also have ideas on where they want to travel due to conversations with the Captain on the previous voyage.

"The Captain has a strong influence on a yacht's appeal," he says.

"When clients make enquiries, they often ask if the Captain is still there along with key crew like the chief stewardess and chef."

Crew are often regarded as important as, if not more important than, the yacht itself. Tsui says clients in Asia sometimes rank a certain crew member above all others in terms of importance.

"The chef is one of the key concerns in Asia. Sometimes clients ask to bring their own or whether the yacht can have a Chinese chef, for example," Tsui says.

"Whether they charter in Asia or the Med, they ask for the best restaurants and we provide recommendations. However, for comfort food or breakfast, for example, they may still want a Chinese or Japanese, Thai, Malaysian chef, depending on where they're from."

Tsui also says Internet connection is hugely important. "This is a big thing. A lot of cruising in Asia is not close to the coast, so yachts can't always get a good 4G signal. Once they're more remote, yachts depend on the VSAT (very-small-aperture terminal), which is a lower speed, so the clients often ask about VSAT speed upgrades."

An experienced scuba diver and wakeboarder, Tsui has travelled to many of Asia's top charter destinations during his time working on *Big Fish*. He says diving is a common activity for trips in Asia and that water toys are among priorities for guests, although activities can differ depending on generations.

"Pretty much all of the destinations in Asia offer good diving, so dive gear is a frequent request. Indonesia and the Maldives, for example, are relatively undeveloped in terms of marinas and superyacht infrastructure, so their appeal is based on their natural attractions," he says.

"Toys are important for some younger clients, who may ask for wakesurfing, jetboards and so on. Older clients may ask about fishing trips and request a crew member who knows the local waters and can take them to the best place for fishing."

As well as tapping into Burgess' global knowledge, Tsui says his well-rounded experience of the superyacht industry, from crew and management to owner's rep and charter broker, helps him connect clients with the right yacht and crew, ensuring they come back for more.

"My experience helps me understand clients and Captains, who I communicate with regularly," Tsui says. "It also helps me deliver what the client wants and makes it easier to manage their expectations because I know what's feasible, what's realistic." ✎

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Papa (below) has chartered in Asia this year; Ramble on Rose (middle) will charter in Thailand this winter; Lady E (top) will soon charter again as a 74.5m yacht



Lind's attractive outdoor areas include a spectacular sun deck with an aft cinema, gym and large spa pool forward (right)

