



THE RITZ-CARLTON YACHT COLLECTION

THE RITZ-CARLTON YACHT COLLECTION EARNS INDUSTRY-FIRST FIVE-STAR RATING FROM FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE

Ilma, the brand's second ultra-luxury yacht, is recognized as the world's first Five-Star Cruise Ship in the 2026 Star Awards



Fort Lauderdale, FL — February 11, 2026 — **The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection** sets a new benchmark in luxury hospitality, becoming the first cruise brand to earn a Five-Star rating from **Forbes Travel Guide**. *Ilma*, the company's second ultra-luxury yacht, receives the milestone distinction in the newly unveiled 2026 Star Awards, announced today by Forbes Travel Guide, the only global rating system for luxury hotels, restaurants, spas and cruise ships. *Ilma* now joins a distinguished group of global honorees showcased on ForbesTravelGuide.com.

Ilma's Five-Star recognition reflects The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's commitment to delivering a highly personalized and refined experience at sea, where thoughtful design, service, and space work in harmony. *Ilma*, meaning "water" in Maltese, launched in September 2024 and spans 790 feet (241 meters), welcoming up to 448 guests across 224 light-filled suites, each featuring a private ocean-view terrace. From expansive accommodations to one of the highest space- and employee-to-guest ratios in the industry, every detail aboard *Ilma* is designed to feel intuitive, seamless, and deeply considered. This approach closely aligns with Forbes Travel Guide's emphasis on authenticity, consistency, and excellence across every touchpoint of the guest journey.



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Purposefully designed to blur the line between interior and exterior living, *Ilma* features polished interiors envisioned by London-based architectural and design firm **AD Associates**, with lighting by **dpa lighting**, and sleek exterior lines by Helsinki-based design studio **Aivan**. Beach House, designed by Toronto-based studio **Chapi Design Luxury Division**, introduces a relaxed, open-air aesthetic that unfolds from day to evening, reinforcing the yacht's fluid relationship with the surrounding sea and destinations.

Sailing itineraries throughout the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, *Ilma* calls on a curated mix of iconic coastal cities and lesser-visited ports, inviting guests to experience destinations with both depth and ease. The yacht's intimate scale and all-suite design allow for a more relaxed pace, balancing immersive time ashore with moments of restoration on board. Each voyage is guided by a sensory-led approach to travel, enriched by thoughtfully designed shore experiences, cultural immersion, and onboard programming including live entertainment.

On board, guests enjoy five exceptional dining venues, including culinary concepts developed in collaboration with award-winning chefs Fabio Trabocchi and Michael Mina, alongside a collection of seven bars and lounges and a dedicated wine vault. The Ritz-Carlton Spa® is an onboard oasis, offering revitalizing treatments from ESPA, 111SKIN, and Pisterzi across both indoor and outdoor treatment rooms. A state-of-the-art fitness experience featuring Technogym equipment complements additional wellness spaces, while an expansive Marina provides direct access to the sea for activities such as paddleboarding, kayaking, Seabob, and electric foiling. Together, these experiences reinforce *Ilma*'s leadership in luxury hospitality at sea.

"From day one, we set out to redefine travel at sea through a highly personalized approach rooted in service, care, and attention to detail," said **Ernesto Fara, President & CEO of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection**. "*Ilma*'s recognition as an industry first underscores a new era of ultra-luxury voyages and reflects years of dedication from our Ladies and Gentlemen, both on board and ashore, who deliver exceptional experiences for our guests every day."

"Our coveted Five-Star award is not given; it is earned through our exacting, incognito evaluation process," said **Amanda Frasier, President of Ratings, Forbes Travel Guide**. "The Five-Star recognition is not just about delivering an exceptional guest experience, but about delivering it consistently from reservation service to disembarking – earning the guest's trust and confidence. This doesn't occur by happenstance, but through dedication and coordination. We congratulate the Ladies and Gentlemen of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection on this impressive achievement."

Forbes Travel Guide's highly anticipated 68th annual Star Awards list covers more than 100 countries. For more information on *Ilma* and The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, visit ritzcarltonyachtcollection.com.

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ABOUT THE RITZ-CARLTON YACHT COLLECTION

The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection redefines luxury at sea, seamlessly blending the legendary service and refined amenities of The Ritz-Carlton® with the freedom and elegance of yachting. Offering bespoke voyages across the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, Alaska, and French Polynesia, the collection provides exclusive access to sought-after and hidden destinations, paired with serene accommodations, unparalleled onboard experiences, and curated excursions ashore that ignite curiosity and discovery at every turn.

The collection's inaugural yacht, *Evrima*, launched in October 2022, measures 624 feet and features 149 airy suites with private ocean-view terraces, accommodating up to 298 guests in an intimate and elegant ambiance. *Ilma*, the second superyacht, debuted in September 2024, spanning 790 feet and showcasing 224 spacious, light-filled accommodations for up to 448 guests, cultivating an extraordinary experience on the water. *Luminara*, which set sail in July 2025, continues this legacy, introducing new itineraries to both iconic cities and secluded harbors.

Each yacht reflects contemporary craftsmanship and meticulous attention to detail, boasting some of the highest employee-to-guest and space-to-guest ratios at sea. Guests enjoy highly personalized service, world-class dining, The Ritz-Carlton Spa®, a signature marina connecting them directly to the ocean, and an atmosphere of relaxed sophistication, fostering connection throughout the journey. Private charter options are also available for fully tailored and unforgettable moments. For more information, visit ritzcarltonyachtcollection.com.

ABOUT FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE

Forbes Travel Guide is the only global rating system for luxury hotels, restaurants, spas, cruises and their restaurants. Our anonymous professional inspectors evaluate based on hundreds of exacting standards, with an emphasis on exceptional service, to help discerning travelers select the world's best experiences. The only way to get a Five-Star, Four-Star or Recommended rating is by earning it through our independent inspection process. For more information about Forbes Travel Guide, please visit ForbesTravelGuide.com.