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Anchors aweigh on a five-star stay

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Liz O'Connor



Yacht hotels set to drop anchor

An artist's impression of the Sunborn Gibraltar, docked in the shadow of the famed Rock of Gib

PHOTOS



A \$224 million "yacht hotel" is set to put down its anchors permanently off the southern tip of Spain by the end of the year.

The *Sunborn Gibraltar* is one of the largest yachts in the world at an astounding 142 metres long and seven stories high, and it's being marketed as a high-end hotel. In land-scarce cities like Gibraltar, ships like these may be the future of high-end hospitality.

The yacht will be moored at the Gibraltar Ocean Village Marina, a prime Mediterranean location, and guests will be ushered onto the boat via an enclosed glass walkway. Six super-strong hydraulic arms, each weighing eight tonnes, will hold the boat to its mooring and keep it in place.

It has 189 rooms and will offer guests a spa, gym, cocktail lounges, conference rooms and even a ballroom.

The *Sunborn Gibraltar* is the second of a fleet of luxury yacht hotels by Sunborn, following the *Sunborn Princess* which moored in Finland in 2002. The company is planning to launch more yacht hotels in London and Barcelona, while others could be used in a temporary capacity at major events such as the Olympics.

It's not expected the Sunborn yachts will do much cruising, however, with most expected to be hard-wired to the mooring by giant electrical cables and 10-year agreements.

The *Sunborn Gibraltar* is set to open later this year, and room rates are expected to cost anywhere between \$330 and \$3000 per night, depending on the room.