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IN THIS ISSUE

CAPTURED 'Change'

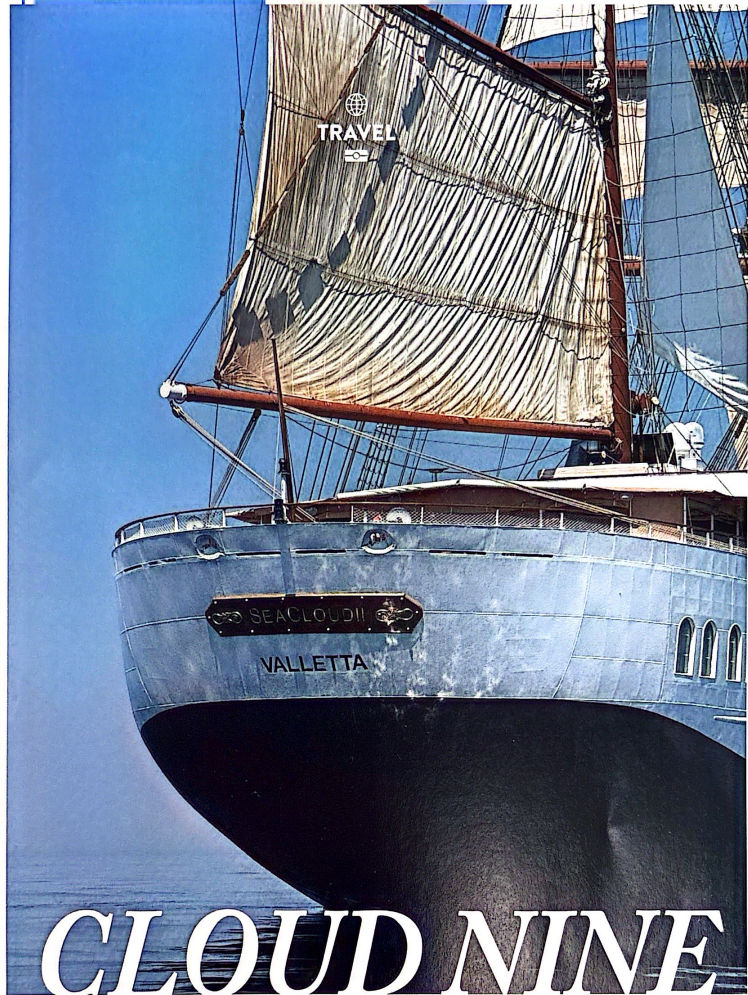
Agenda: Wealth 2025

Run Club Rundown

'Interchangeable' Fashion

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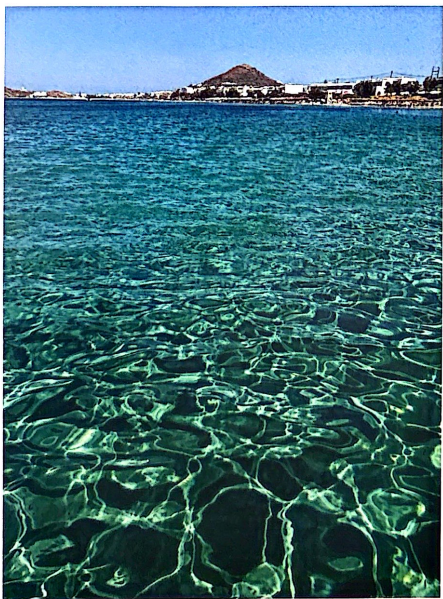
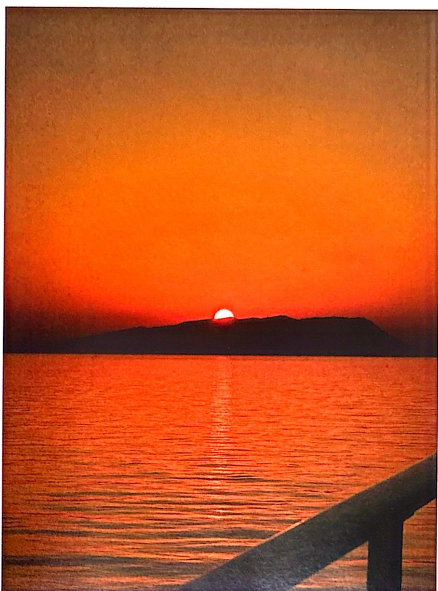
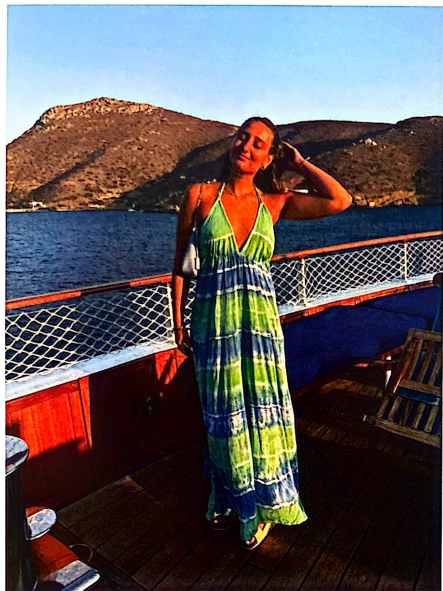


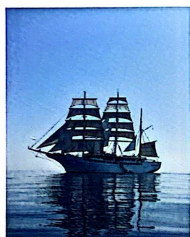
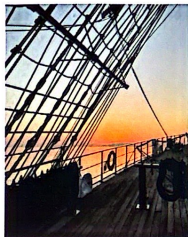
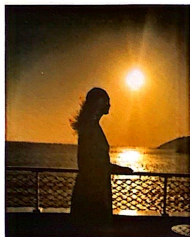
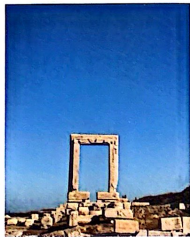
CLOUD NINE

CRUISING THROUGH THE AEGEAN

Words & Photography: Flo Balderson

The day had arrived when I left Jersey on the red eye and made my way to Athens, ready to leave the ordinary behind for a week. I hopped in a taxi to Piraeus, chatting away, telling the driver all about the trip that was about to begin. In the distance, I spotted the tips of three strong masts peeking from behind the cliff. The driver and I exchanged a knowing glance that the ship was my destination. Dramatically, we pulled up, feeling like the scene from *Mamma Mia* when Colin Firth arrives, narrowly missing his ferry to Kalokairi.





Grandiose, elegant, imposing. A golden eagle jutted from the bow. Masses of rope and rigging sprawled across the deck, crew members delicately moving about in iconic sailor outfits. I was handed a cold lemon towel to mop my brow. My luggage was whisked away, a cup of cold water replaced quickly by a crisp glass of champagne.

Smiling faces guided me to my cabin. 'Cabin' hardly seemed adequate to describe what felt more like Queen Elizabeth's stately home. Pure serotonin surged through me as I squealed, opening every cupboard, dancing in the walk-in wardrobe, and laughing at the sheer realness of it all. I ran a bath, changed into my robe, refilled my champagne, and sat looking out the window; very nonchalantly, of course.

Dinner was relaxed. Tired travelers lazily sipped wine while we got acquainted. The crew introduced themselves and shared what

was planned for the week. I enjoyed a seafood buffet, gazing at the horizon as the crisp sea air embraced me. That night, I lay on the sundeck, spotting shooting stars and marveling at the Milky Way.

The next morning, I awoke to the sound of sails being hoisted. Thirty-two sails unfurled into the wind. We spent the day indulging at sea, it was a hard life of reading, sipping coffee, and tanning underneath the greek sun. That afternoon, the crew worked tirelessly to prepare for the first welcome dinner.

I dressed in a cream floral dress, curled my hair, and applied a pink lip. Stepping onto the deck, I was swept up in the glamour of the elegantly dressed guests; bow ties, suits, and clothes of every hue. The sun hung low, casting shadows of onyx across the boat. Wind danced through our hair as music played and the drinks flowed.

That night, I ate and ate. Courses of delicate culinary wonders appeared one after another: lobster bisque, crispy melting goat's cheese, braised beef with rich, glossy gravy. Each course came with the perfect wine pairing. The crew tended to every need, every dietary request, every question. Nothing was overlooked. I ended the evening on the deck, sipping an Old Fashioned and puffing a cigarette. Returning to my cabin, I found my pajamas neatly laid out with a chocolate on the bed. I tumbled in, lulled to sleep by the rocking of the ship.

Our first island stop was Patmos, the home of John the Revelator. Exiled there, he reportedly received visions that became the Book of Revelations. The ship offered a lecture for the history enthusiasts. Our local guide led us to the monastery, a pilgrimage site for the devout. I observed, fascinated by the spiritual release others experienced. The Greek isles intertwine history across centuries, my favorite being the focus on ancient mythology where we were taken to Naxos to stand beneath the Gate of Apollo.

Though a self-proclaimed historyphile, my focus has always been the ocean. I struggle with heat, which makes it hard to concentrate on the classics when all I want is to jump headfirst into the water. To my joy, took us nicely on to our next island - Amorgos (my favorite island). The ocean was crystal clear, a turquoise plunge pool inviting me in.

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Throughout the week, I got to know the crew, made friends with fellow guests, and began to feel at home. I learned my way around the ship. A week in, the yacht felt like home, yet watching boats head out from the port just to catch a closer glimpse reminded me how remarkable the vessel really was. As we approached Syros, the final port, I was utterly captivated by the city. It felt like stepping into King's Landing, and I was Tyrion Lannister, contemplating my next move.

I write with a touch of fiction because this experience felt like a dream. Each day I stepped into a new character, living as a king, walking as an ancient being. My imagination reignited, I came alive with the force of nature, connection, and joy that exists aboard this ship.

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