

SIR BANI YAS OFFSHORE RACE CONCLUDES WITH SHAHRAZAD CROWNED 2014 WINNER

Winning boat sailed from Sir Bani Yas to Dubai in 38 hours with six sailors.

Abu Dhabi, April 21, 2014 – The first-ever Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race, which started on Friday, April 18, came to an end yesterday with a prize-giving ceremony at the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club, crowning Shahrazad the 2014 winner of the race. In its first edition, the two-day nonstop race brought 70 sailing enthusiasts aboard 11 boats together for a week-long event, which was organised by Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), in partnership with Anantara Hotels Resorts & Spas, Rotana Jet, Dubai Offshore Sailing Club (DOSC), and Volvo Ocean Race Abu Dhabi Stopover.

The Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race was the last of a series of races for the season by the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club. The 11 participating boats were: Omnia, Shahrazad, Feochan, Tazo Too, Andorra, Tripple Dutch, Maverick, Yours Truly, Nia Ben Aur, Lady Lucies, and Bin Toak. Shahrazad, the big winner of the event, regularly races to Muscat and Sir Abu Nair and competes in the local boat regattas and the annual Commodore's Cup Regatta.

Ahmed Al Fahim, Executive Director of Marketing, Communications, Sales and Leasing at TDIC, stated: "We are so happy to see that the first Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race has been such a successful event, thanks to the support of our partners. By opening the island's water to such a sailing activity, we've been able to open a new destination to the UAE sailing community which had been previously been out of reach, as well as expand the destination's offering. It's been proven once again that Abu Dhabi, with destinations such as Sir Bani Yas, could potentially become the region's ultimate sailing destination to sailors here and around the world."

Faisal Al Sheikh, Director Events Bureau, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), which supported the race, spoke of its legacy.

"Events such as these aid our long-term ambitions to have Abu Dhabi clearly positioned within the international sailing community as a winter destination of choice where favourable climatic conditions combine with dynamic sea and landscapes to deliver memorable experiences. In addition, we want to build on our emirate's maritime heritage and encourage more people, young and old, national and expatriate, to get out onto our waters and enjoy healthy lifestyles. These are key elements of our involvement in the Volvo Ocean Race and which are fed at the local level by competitive events. With over 400 kilometres of shoreline and a plethora of natural islands to discover, Abu Dhabi is made for sailing and watersports."

David Worrall, Captain of the Shahrazad, said: "We're thrilled to have been part of the first Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race and to have come out as the winners of it. It was a challenging yet just a remarkably beautiful route to sail," he said. "It has also been a great opportunity for us

and other fellow sailors to explore Sir Bani Yas together. Overall, it's been an incredible experience which we would love to do again."

Due to the success of its first edition, TDIC is looking at making the Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race an annual event that would bring sailors from the UAE to Sir Bani Yas Island. The island is one of the largest natural islands in the United Arab Emirates and is a sanctuary to over 10,000 indigenous and non-indigenous terrestrial mammals, many of which are endangered or extinct in the wild. The island also hosts the Arabian Wildlife Park, home to one of the largest Arabian Oryx herds in the world.

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About Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC)

Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), established in 2006 and fully owned by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority, is a master developer of major tourism, cultural and residential destinations in Abu Dhabi.

These include Saadiyat, a natural island ten minutes drive from downtown Abu Dhabi featuring luxury resorts, championship beachfront golf courses, sophisticated residential communities, retail destinations and cultural institutions - designed by world-renowned Pritzker Prize-winning architects - such as Zayed National Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. TDIC is also developing Desert Islands, a heritage-based tourism destination composed of eight islands - Sir Bani Yas Island, the historical Dalma Island and the previously unexplored Discovery Islands.

TDIC has built a strong reputation among international industry players for its compelling value proposition, transparency of business approach and ability to deliver. The company has been awarded high investment grade ratings of A1, AA, and AA by three top credit rating agencies, Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings, respectively. These ratings reflect TDIC's strong financial position and support the company's credit worthiness to investors, lenders and other market participants.

By creating investment partnerships and joint ventures, TDIC's developments are helping to support the Emirate's evolution into a world-class destination for tourists, businesses and residents. TDIC offers significant employment and vocational training opportunities for Emiratis keen to enhance their careers and professional qualifications.

For further information, please visit <http://www.tdic.ae>.

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