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Sail dream yacht for only a fraction of its cost

LIFESTYLE Fractional sailing is time-sharing for the use of a yacht among the owner and five or six other people

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If you dream of sailing in the high seas but find the cost and maintenance of a yacht restrictive, "fractional sailing" is just the thing for you.

Fractional sailing is time-sharing for the use of the yacht among the owner and five or six other people. One has to pay only a fraction of the cost of the boat.

Mumbai-based Aquasail will be soon launching this service for the uninitiated sailor.

"Fractional sailing acts like a bridge for the people who wish to experience sailing before deciding to invest in a yacht or a power boat," Aquasail Director Shakeel Kudrolli said here.

Founded in 2004, Aquasail represents leading sailing and water activity brands like Beneteau, France yachts and powerboats, Hobie catamarans and Neil Pryde Windsurfing.

Despite the absence of marinas to park, yachts are fast gaining popularity among the high networth individuals.

Boats ranging from Rs 20 lakh to over Rs 2 crore are the new symbol of luxury, just like foreign cars and executive jets.

"Last year, the industry did a sale of about Rs 50 crore in India and we would not be surprised if it grows to Rs 150 crore this year," Kudrolli said.

Aquashare, the timeshare division of the company, will help owners to lease their yachts for a cost as these boats are used only two to four days in a month.

By paying about one-tenth of the cost, sailing aspirants

could own and use these yachts.

With an online scheduler and high quality maintenance and servicing, Aquashare aims to offer a hassle-free way to own a yacht or a powerboat.

"We will also teach sailing to the people apart from offering providing all hospitality to them. We expect to have at least 30 members in Aquashare initially," Kudrolli said.

A premier yachtsman, Kudrolli won for India its first ever

gold medal on international waters at the Asian Championship held in China.

He said there was a great market for leisure sailing in India and Aquasail will soon unveil Sailience, a corporate sailing solution.

"Through Sailience, we will introduce people to the experience of sailing. A range of programmes and events by encompassing sailing dinghies to large sailing yachts will provide them an experience and help them in team-building," he says.