

PACIFIC BOATING
20TH ANNIVERSARY GUIDE

pb

QUIETER
WATER
IS *Better*
WATER

MUST VISIT
WINTER
ANCHORAGES

the case for
going out anyway

RETHINKING
THE SEASON

ISSUE 01 | JULY 2026

pb
20
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS



a message from phillip pitt

to our pacific boating family,

It's hard to believe that 20 years have passed since we first set out to change the way Sydney goes boating. Back in 2006, the industry looked very different. If you wanted to spend a day on the harbour, you largely had two choices: buy a boat and inherit a second job in maintenance, or charter one and be a passenger in your own city.

I wanted to create a third way. I wanted to build a club where the barriers to entry — cost, time and skill — were dismantled. Our philosophy was simple:

"Why deal with the hassle of ownership when you can create unforgettable, effortless memories?"

THE COMMUNITY

Looking back, what I'm most proud of is the families I've seen grow up on our boats. The same faces come back season after season, the kids a little taller each time they step aboard. To our members, thank you. Your trust in us to safeguard your most precious asset, your leisure time, is what drives us every day.

THE FLEET

Our shift to the Sea Ray Sports Cruisers was a pivotal moment. We chose these vessels because they perfectly match our waterways, combining the entertaining space of a pontoon with the performance of a runabout and the accommodation of a cruiser. Whether you're on the Harbour or the Hawkesbury, these boats are designed to be your home away from home.

[Explore the Fleet →](#)

THE FUTURE

As we look to the next 20 years, our commitment to safety and service remains our true north. We're already exploring what the next generation of boating might look like. Here's to the next 20 years of sunsets and salt spray.

Warmly,

Phillip

Phillip Pitt
Managing Director



Own the Memories, not the Boat



minimum of
24 days access



a fleet of luxury
sports cruisers



pittwater &
sydney harbour



comprehensive
no-cost training



walk-on
walk-off service



easy-to-use online
booking system

if you dream of spending your days on the water enjoying quality time with family and friends, cruising, sightseeing or fishing, joining a boat club is the perfect option.



JOIN THE CLUB

pacific boating

welcome aboard

welcome to issue one of the pacific boating 20th anniversary guide.
for two decades, we've believed the best way to see sydney is from the water, and the best way to do that is without the hassle of ownership.

Whether you're a member, stepping behind your first helm, own your own boat or wishing you could... this guide is designed to help anyone interested in boating rediscover our stunning backyard. From hidden coves in Pittwater to the icons of the Harbour, we invite you to explore, unwind and own the memories.

THE PACIFIC BOATING STORY

Pacific Boating launched in 2006 with one clear purpose: to make the joy of boating accessible, simple and safe for all Sydneysiders without the cost, stress or commitment of owning a boat.

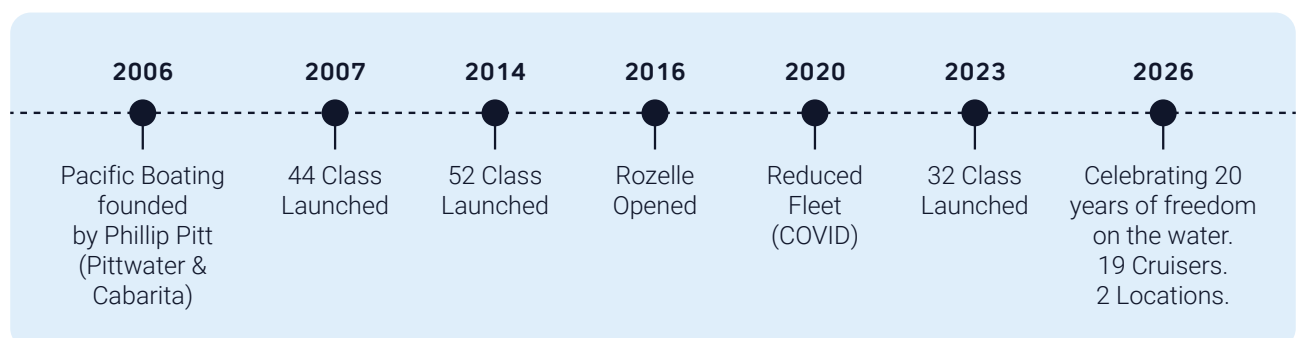
In a market dominated by complex syndicates and high-maintenance ownership, founder Phillip Pitt saw the catch at the heart of boat ownership, the people who own boats rarely have the time to enjoy them. The vision was bold and simple, create a club atmosphere where the only thing a member needs to bring is their family, friends, food and their sense of adventure.

Over the last 20 years, Pacific Boating has evolved from a niche alternative into the largest Australian-owned boat club of its kind. Beginning in Pittwater and Cabarita, the club has shifted and grown into its current dual-location operation, offering members the best of both worlds, the cosmopolitan energy of our Rozelle Bay base on Sydney Harbour and the serenity of The Quays Marina in Church Point, Pittwater.

Today, our fleet of 19 luxury Sea Ray Sports Cruisers makes good on that original promise. We have transformed thousands of novices into competent skippers through our comprehensive training programs, proving that you don't need a lifetime of experience to skipper your own boat.

AS WE CELEBRATE THIS MILESTONE, OUR PHILOSOPHY REMAINS UNCHANGED:

why boat the hard way?



THE BEST-KEPT SECRET

On The Water



why winter might be the best season to be out on pittwater, the hawkesbury and sydney harbour

There's a strange thing that happens with Sydney boat owners every May. The cover goes on, the lines get coiled away, and the boat sits at the mooring looking faintly embarrassed, like it's been put to bed for a season it never asked for. Ask most owners why, and you'll get some version of the same answer: "it's winter."

Except it isn't, really. Not out on the water.

Sydney's winter water sits in the high teens — generally between 16°C and 19°C, depending on the week and how far offshore you go — which is brisk

but entirely civilised, and nowhere near cold enough to justify months of covered boats. Air temperatures on the harbour rarely dip below 8°C even on the coldest mornings, and plenty of July days climb past 17°C with barely a cloud in the sky. The truth is Sydney's winter is mild by any reasonable global standard, and the boating community's enthusiasm for hibernation has more to do with habit than with conditions on the water.

So this winter, before the cover goes on, it's worth asking: what exactly are we missing out on?

the bays that were built for this

winter in sydney brings a particular kind of light — low and golden, without the summer haze that sits over the water from december to february.

It's the kind of light that makes the sandstone escarpments around Pittwater and the Hawkesbury look like they're lit from within, and it arrives in the season when the waterways are at their quietest and easiest to get around.

Broken Bay in winter is a different proposition to Broken Bay in January. America Bay, Refuge Bay and Coasters Retreat — three of the most sought-after anchorages — spend summer weekends groaning under rafted-up boats and criss-crossing jet skis, with demand for the public moorings that tests anyone's patience.

Drop into America Bay on a winter Saturday and there's no queue for anything. The same deep, sheltered bay, the same walk up to the waterfall, but with room to swing on the hook and silence enough to hear the bellbirds in the escarpment above you.

The sheer sandstone walls that wrap around these bays don't care what season it is. They cut a July southerly just as readily as they block a January nor'easter, which is why these anchorages have never had an off-season.



pittwater's western foreshores tell the same story

The Basin is Pittwater's best-known overnight stop for good reason. It's sheltered from every direction, with a netted swimming lagoon and a campground at its back door. But that's why summer bookings vanish weeks out. In winter, the deep anchorage and the bushwalking trails up to the West Head rock engravings are all yours. A little further north, Mackerel Beach and its quieter neighbour Currawong sit side by side beneath the Ku-ring-gai escarpment, two of the oldest corners of Pittwater. Mackerel was a dairy farm in the 1820s, Currawong a union holiday camp from 1949, now heritage-listed, its cabins still bookable through the council. Both are accessible only by water, which keeps them peaceful even in peak season; in winter they're close to deserted.

A few bays south, Morning Bay (still known to plenty of old salts as Towlers Bay) is one of the safest and easiest anchorages on the whole waterway, with two sheltered arms and a shallow, sandy shoreline that's forgiving for anyone still getting a feel for anchoring technique. Push on towards Coasters Retreat and you'll find Portuguese Beach, a small, little-visited bay that locals rate as one of the best winter anchorages on Pittwater because its westerly shelter and morning sun make it comfortable when other spots are catching the cold southerly chop. There are no public moorings in either — club buoys fill Morning Bay, Portuguese is anchor-only — but in winter there's rarely any competition for swinging room.

HEAD FURTHER UP THE HAWKESBURY AND THE APPEAL ONLY GROWS.

The bays of Cowan Creek and the network of arms off Berowra offer the kind of stillness that's almost impossible to find between Boxing Day and Australia Day. Winter mornings here often arrive dead calm, with mist sitting low over the water until the sun gets above the ridgeline, the conditions experienced boaters chase and beginners benefit from most.





closer to the city, sydney harbour's quieter corners reward the same logic.

Bantry Bay, tucked into Middle Harbour, is where Sydney once kept its explosives — a deep, narrow inlet ringed by bushland that feels a world away from the ferries and tour boats working the main channels, even though it's barely twenty minutes from the CBD by water. In summer it gets its share of weekend traffic; in winter it can feel like having a private harbour. The surrounding national park bushland holds its colour year-round, so the scenery loses nothing in the cooler months, while the crowds thin out.

Over on the harbour's northern side, Store Beach is in a class of its own. In Spring Cove inside Sydney Harbour National Park near Manly, it's home to the only mainland breeding colony of little penguins in

New South Wales, and it can only be reached by water — there's no walking track in. That isolation is what's protected it for so long: it's where quarantine cargo was landed and aired out in the 1800s, and even had a 9.2-inch gun for North Head's battery put ashore here before being hauled up the headland. These days it's one of the prettiest, quietest anchorages on the harbour, and winter brings the summer crowds to an end while the colony itself is at its most active. Beach access is prohibited after dusk to keep the penguins safe as they come ashore for the night, so plan any visit for daylight hours and treat the beach gently — it's a protected wildlife reserve, not a picnic ground to leave a trace on.

QUIETER
WATER IS
Better
WATER;



ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE *still learning...*

there's a benefit to winter boating that rarely makes it into the brochure copy, and it beats the scenery, quieter waterways are easier and safer to learn on.

Anyone who has tried to pick up a mooring cleanly at America Bay on a January Saturday, threading between rafted-up cruisers, paddleboarders and three other boats also eyeing the same spot, knows that summer is not a forgiving classroom. Winter is. With far less traffic on the water, new boaters get the rare luxury of space — room to practise picking up a mooring without an audience, room to get a feel for how the boat handles in a bit of breeze, without three other skippers watching and judging.

The moorings themselves are part of this. The public and semi-public moorings in the most popular bays are notoriously oversubscribed in summer, often requiring an early arrival or a willingness to anchor off instead. In winter, that competition largely evaporates.

The moorings that are impossible to secure on a summer long weekend sit empty on a winter Sunday, which means new boaters can use what's there, rather than treating it as a lottery.

Winter conditions demand respect. Cold-water immersion is more serious than a summer dunking, days are shorter, and a sensible boater checks the forecast and dresses for the conditions rather than the calendar. But none of that is a reason to stay tied up - just to go out the way experienced boaters always have, with proper preparation and a watchful eye on the weather. The waterways aren't more dangerous in winter; they're less forgiving of complacency.

the case for going out anyway



beyond the obvious peace and quiet, winter boating in sydney comes with a few practical advantages that are easy to overlook.

Marinas, slipways and boat services tend to be far less booked out, which makes winter the ideal time to schedule that engine service, antifouling job or upgrade you've been putting off, without the months-long wait that built-up summer demand usually creates. Fuel docks have no queue. Boat ramps that are a circus on a summer Saturday morning are available. And for anyone shopping for a boat, winter is traditionally a quieter time in the brokerage market, which can work in a buyer's favour.

Then there's the wildlife. Sydney's winter coincides with the humpback whale migration. Whales move along the coast from around May to November. A day on the harbour or even a coastal run timed right can turn into a whale-watching trip few summer outings can match.

AND THE LIGHT, AGAIN... IT DESERVES A SECOND MENTION.

Photographers will tell you winter on the water produces the best images of the year: long shadows, warm low sun, water that's often glassy in the early morning before any breeze sets in. If you've ever wanted that postcard shot of your boat against the sandstone cliffs of Pittwater, winter is when you get it.



RETHINKING THE SEASON

None of this is to say winter boating is identical to summer boating; treating it that way would be careless. Days are shorter, so plans need to start earlier and finish earlier. Pack more layers than you would in January. And it makes sense to be choosier with weather windows

But the idea that boating is fundamentally a summer activity in a harbour city with 16–19°C winter water and mild winter air temperatures is hard to hold onto once you've idled out of Church Point on a July morning. The bays that make Pittwater, the Hawkesbury and Sydney Harbour worth having a boat for in the first place — America Bay's waterfall walk, the stillness of Morning Bay, Currawong and Mackerel

beneath the escarpment, Store Beach's hidden penguin colony, Bantry Bay's bushland hush — don't go anywhere in June. If anything, they become more themselves: quieter, clearer, easier to enjoy without negotiating for space.

So before that cover goes on this year, give winter a second look.

*The mooring
might just be free
when you get there.*

06

WINTER ANCHORAGES AT A GLANCE

AMERICA BAY & REFUGE BAY, COWAN CREEK

Twin sandstone-walled inlets off Cowan Creek, sheltered in all but a strong nor'wester. America Bay's waterfall walk is the drawcard; the head of the bay holds the evening sun longest. Public moorings available, and in winter you'll likely have your pick of them.

THE BASIN, PITTWATER

Pittwater's most popular overnight stop, protected from every direction, with a netted swimming lagoon, campground, BBQs and walking trails up to the West Head Aboriginal rock engravings. Booked out most summer weekends; wide open in winter.

MACKEREL BEACH & CURRAWONG, PITTWATER

Neighbouring water-access-only beaches beneath the Ku-ring-gai escarpment. Mackerel began as an 1820s dairy farm; Currawong was a union holiday camp from the 1940s, now heritage-listed, its cabins still bookable. Quiet even in summer, near-deserted in winter.

MORNING BAY & PORTUGUESE BEACH, PITTWATER

Morning Bay (still called Towlers Bay by old hands) has two sheltered, shallow arms that are forgiving for anyone learning to anchor. Portuguese Beach, tucked toward Coasters Retreat, takes its winter shelter from westerlies and morning sun. Anchor-only at Portuguese; club moorings fill Morning Bay.

STORE BEACH, SYDNEY HARBOUR

Inside Spring Cove near Manly, reachable only by water and home to the only mainland breeding colony of little penguins in NSW. Once used to land quarantine cargo in the 1800s. Beach access closes at dusk to protect the penguins — plan your visit for daylight.

BANTRY BAY, MIDDLE HARBOUR

A deep, narrow, bushland-ringed inlet barely twenty minutes from the CBD by water, with public moorings and none of the ferry traffic of the main harbour channels.

pacific boating's pittwater base at the quays marina, church point, puts every pittwater and cowan creek anchorage above within an easy cruise — and smiths creek, a deep, sheltered gorge about 90 minutes from church point with public moorings in each of its three bays, is worth the run further up cowan creek on a calm winter day.



BANTRY BAY, MIDDLE HARBOUR

A WEEKEND WITH ISAAC HEENEY

WHERE ELSE WOULD YOU RATHER WAKE UP?

"i've been a member of pacific boating for 12 months. the training you do and the support from the team to make us confident and comfortable is great."



A Winters morning in Sydney

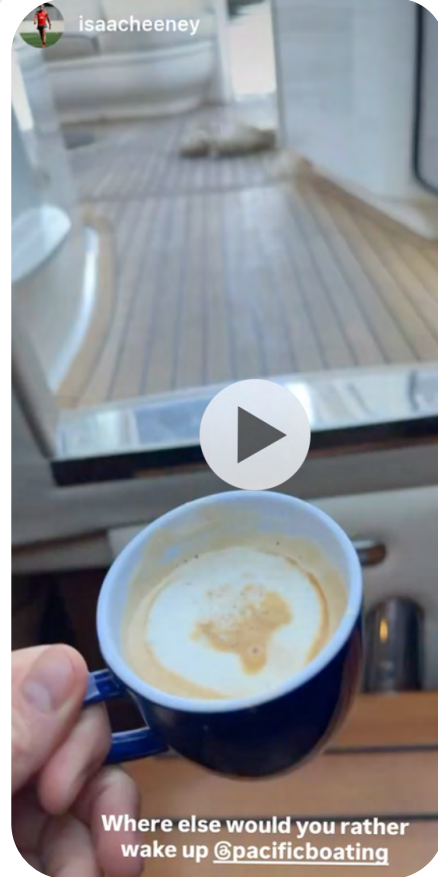
"cruising with you has provided some of the best weekends i've had."

"a highlight of the weekend was being able to pull up at a destination mooring and have a really nice dinner at Ormeaggio at The Spit."

"...and my favourite part was mooring at bantry bay, waking up to glassy waters and beautiful bush all around and then jumping on the tender and going right up into the shallows."

some of the best weekends...

ISAAC HEENEY
THE SYDNEY SWANS



pacific boating

if you dream of spending your days on the water enjoying quality time with family and friends, cruising, sightseeing or fishing, joining a boat club is the perfect option.

Boating can be costly and complex, but with Pacific Boating, you can enjoy the lifestyle for a monthly membership starting from \$1,395 and gain access to our luxurious fleet at two locations: Sydney Harbour and Pittwater.

Enjoy overnight stays and multi-day escapes with complete walk-on, walk-off service. The maintenance, cleaning and berthing are our problem. Pure enjoyment, perfected over 20 years

Why deal with the hassle of ownership when you can create unforgettable, effortless memories on the water by joining the club?

With Pacific Boating membership, you can enjoy:

- Comprehensive no-cost training
- Access to premium locations: Sydney Harbour and Pittwater
- A minimum of 24 days access
- Easy-to-use online booking system
- Walk-on, walk-off service
- A fleet of luxury sports cruisers

Whether it's a quiet morning at anchor or a weekend away with the family, it's all a booking away. Enquire today.

A man and a woman are sitting on a boat, looking out at a body of water with a forested shoreline in the background. They are both wearing sunglasses and holding glasses of red wine. The background is a bright blue sky with some lens flare effects.

Win

one of 4 memberships
with pacific boating
valued at \$25,000 each

\$100,000 IN PRIZES

30 JUL - 2 AUG
SYDNEY SHOWGROUND

SYDNEY
BOAT SHOW

ENTER FREE WITH YOUR SYDNEY BOAT SHOW TICKET

*Own the memories.
not the boat*

Full terms at pacificboating.com.au/win. NSW Authority No. TP 05143



i was a member of pacific boating for 6 years, and it was an outstanding experience from start to finish.

The membership was fantastic for our family. We had the opportunity to explore so many beautiful waterways, including Sydney Harbour, Pittwater, and stunning locations like Smiths Creek. We even spent a few nights on board, swimming with the kids, relaxing, and making some wonderful family memories.

We were members of the 44-foot class, and the boats were very well cleaned, equipped and maintained. Whether it was cooking a barbecue, preparing meals on the stove, or using the onboard shower, everything you needed for a comfortable day or overnight trip was there.

One of the biggest highlights was the training. Pacific Boating allows you to attend as many training sessions as you need, which gave me the confidence to safely manoeuvre and operate a vessel of this size. Learning to handle a 44-foot boat was something I'd always wanted to achieve, and thanks to their excellent training, I accomplished that goal.

Boat availability was also excellent. As long as you booked ahead, I never had any issues securing a boat.

The staff were always friendly, professional, and happy to help. A special thank you to Adam Price, who looked after me throughout my entire membership. He was always approachable, knowledgeable, and genuinely cared about making sure members had a great experience. The rest of the team were also fantastic and always willing to assist.

From a financial perspective, the membership represents excellent value. When you compare it to the costs of owning a boat — such as purchase price, maintenance, insurance, servicing, and mooring fees — it makes a lot of sense. You get all the enjoyment of boating without the ongoing hassles and expense of ownership.

Although my membership has now come to an end, I wouldn't hesitate to join Pacific Boating again in the future. I highly recommend them to anyone who wants to experience boating without the commitment of owning a boat and the amazing walk on walk off service. It was 6 years well spent, and I'm grateful for all the great memories my family and I made along the way.

- Peter C



OWN THE MEMORIES,
NOT THE BOAT

JOIN THE CLUB – ENQUIRE TODAY

pacificboating.com.au



pacific boating