



Press Info – 27 may, 2026

GRAND PAVOIS LA ROCHELLE 2026: OPENING UP TO A WIDER AUDIENCE THROUGH THE CREATION OF NEW SPACES

The 2026 edition of Grand Pavois La Rochelle, the international in-water boat show, will be marked by innovation with the creation of new thematic spaces. A true hallmark of Grand Pavois La Rochelle, these thematic areas make the show accessible to all visitor profiles, whether they are passionate boating enthusiasts or newcomers to nautical activities.

While the stated ambition of Grand Pavois Organisation and its flagship event is to continue meeting the expectations of the loyal boating community that has supported the show for decades, it is equally committed to attracting new audiences and everyone wishing to discover boating and all its activities in their many forms.

Remaining competitive among international boat shows, demonstrating a genuine capacity for innovation and attentive listening, while reflecting the major global trends shaping the nautical world, are key priorities for Grand Pavois La Rochelle. The show aims to stay closely connected to marine industry professionals while introducing new ideas and solutions for beginners and the wider public.

Creation of a new “Boat trip experience” Area

Already recognized as an “experiential” boat show thanks to its sea trials, activities, introductory sessions and demonstrations, Grand Pavois La Rochelle will further strengthen this immersive approach in 2026 with a brand-new area: “**Boat trip experience area.**”

The idea is simple: visitors will no longer come only to see boats on display — they will also have the opportunity to live the experience. While many visitors are fascinated by the boating world, a large number have never actually been out at sea. This new “Get Out on the Water” area will offer simple and accessible introductions to sailing and motorboating, allowing visitors to discover the feeling of being on the water, experience new sensations, reassure first-time participants, and enjoy a unique moment with family or friends. Above all, it will demonstrate that the sea is not reserved solely for experts or boat owners.

The objective is therefore no longer merely to “see boats” but to enjoy a genuine nautical experience. The ambition is to move the show from a traditional exhibition model toward an experience-driven model, reflecting visitors’ growing search for emotion and immersive experiences. These real-life activities — sailing excursions and motorboat outings — will also create stronger memories and encourage social sharing. Through discovery trips and “micro-maritime adventures,” this dedicated area will unquestionably make the show more vibrant and distinctive. **The mission of this space is clear: to simplify access to boating and water-based activities.**

At Grand Pavois La Rochelle, don't just look at the sea — experience it!

Among the experiences available: Sailing trips aboard sailing boats, Motorboat outings in the Pertuis area, Discovery cruises in La Rochelle's Old Harbour, Trips around the iconic "Phare du Bout du Monde" lighthouse...

A Dedicated "Tourism" Area

Creating a fully dedicated "**Tourism**" area within Grand Pavois La Rochelle is a natural and strategic step, as modern boating is no longer limited to boat ownership alone. It has become a way of travelling, experiencing and discovering new destinations and sensations. Today's visitors seek experiences. While many attendees do not own a boat and may not have an immediate purchase project, they dream of maritime escape.

A dedicated Tourism area answers these expectations by showcasing nautical destinations, coastal experiences, maritime ecotourism and alternative ways of discovering and enjoying boating. The show thus becomes a gateway to maritime travel, bringing together French and international coastal regions, islands, marinas, tourism boards, sustainable tourism stakeholders and nautical activity providers.

Grand Pavois La Rochelle therefore becomes a showcase for maritime tourism experiences and aligns perfectly with powerful global trends such as experiential tourism, slow travel, nature-based holidays, soft mobility, digital-detox vacations and sustainable tourism. A world in which the sea and boating naturally meet these aspirations.

Reminder: Japan, 2026 Guest of Honour

Grand Pavois La Rochelle will have the honour of welcoming **Japan as Guest of Honour for 2026**, under the banner of elegance, innovation and a profound maritime culture.

An archipelago of more than 6,800 islands bordered by the Pacific Ocean, Japan has maintained an intimate relationship with the sea for centuries — as a source of livelihood, exchange, inspiration and technological excellence. The Japanese Pavilion will also serve as a place of dialogue and exchange between nautical cultures. As is well known, the "Land of the Rising Sun" is a major player in international boating, marine electronics, technological innovation and sport fishing.

Inviting Japan reflects Grand Pavois La Rochelle's determination to celebrate the diversity of maritime cultures and strengthen the bridges between tradition and modernity, between East and West.

According to Anaïs Lheureux, CEO of Grand Pavois La Rochelle:

"As Grand Pavois La Rochelle and a benchmark event for boating enthusiasts, we have a responsibility to open up to the widest possible audience and encourage access to nautical activities. This is a genuine commitment shared by the Grand Pavois Board of Directors and a major priority for all our exhibiting professionals. The creation of these two new spaces fully reflects our ambition to bring more people closer to the sea and its activities, and to demonstrate that boating is accessible and open to everyone — individually, with friends or as a family. Furthermore, all sectors of the marine industry are interconnected, which is why we must remain united and carry this shared message together: the sea — experience it!"

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Google Drive link for royalty-free photographs and show visuals

Key Facts...

Venue: Port des Minimes, La Rochelle, France

2026 Dates: Tuesday 22 September to Sunday 27 September 2026 - 10:00 am to 7:00 pm (Sunday until 6:00 pm)

Attendance: 70,000 visitors expected over six days

Guest of Honour: Japan

Thematic Areas for Every Passion : Boats ashore and afloat, Multihulls Area, Equipment Area, Services Area, Charter & Cruising Area, Heritage & Know-how Area, Fishing Area & Grand Pavois Fishing, Grand Pavois Beach, Sea Trial Area, Guest of Honour Pavilion, Eco-Boating & Sustainable Innovation Area with EDF, **Boat trip experience Area (NEW), Tourism Area (NEW)**...

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More information: www.grand-pavois.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/GrandPavois

Instagram: @grand_pavois_official

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GRAND PAVOIS ORGANISATION, CREATOR AND ORGANISER OF NAUTICAL EVENTS!

Grand Pavois Organisation (GPO) provides the nautical events industry with tailor-made expertise, consultancy, know-how and unique experience in France and internationally.

Thanks to its non-profit association status, GPO enjoys genuine proximity to the international marine industry and has built a recognized expertise in nautical event management, including offshore racing, corporate events and boat show organisation.

References : Organiser of Grand Pavois La Rochelle International In-Water Boat Show since 1973, Nice Boating Tomorrow 2026 (France), Salao Nautico de Salvador (Brazil, 2023 & 2024), "Les Nauticales" Boat Show, La Ciotat (France, 2013–2021), Shenzhen China International Boat Show (China, 2009–2011), Partner of the China Qinhuangdao Aranya-Westport (Grand Pavois) International Boat Show 2025 & 2026, Rallye des Îles du Soleil (since 2017), Défi Atlantique Guadeloupe / Horta / La Rochelle (2019, 2023 & 2027), Class40 World Championship (2010 & 2022), Transat 6.50 Charente-Maritime/Bahia – Mini Transat (France/Brazil, 2001–2011), Naming ceremonies for Imoca 60 *Maître CoQ V* of Yannick Bestaven (2022), *Macif* of François Gabart (2011), Class40 *Le Conservateur* of Yannick Bestaven (2014), Inauguration of Chantier de l’Arsenal / Yacht Concept (La Rochelle, 2026)

More information: www.gpoevents.com

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