

# OCEANMAN MAGAZINE

## OCEANMAN

### Travels

The Charm of Palermo,  
the city of Kings

### Training Tips

Mastering the elements: Building  
resilience

## OCEANMAN

### Stories

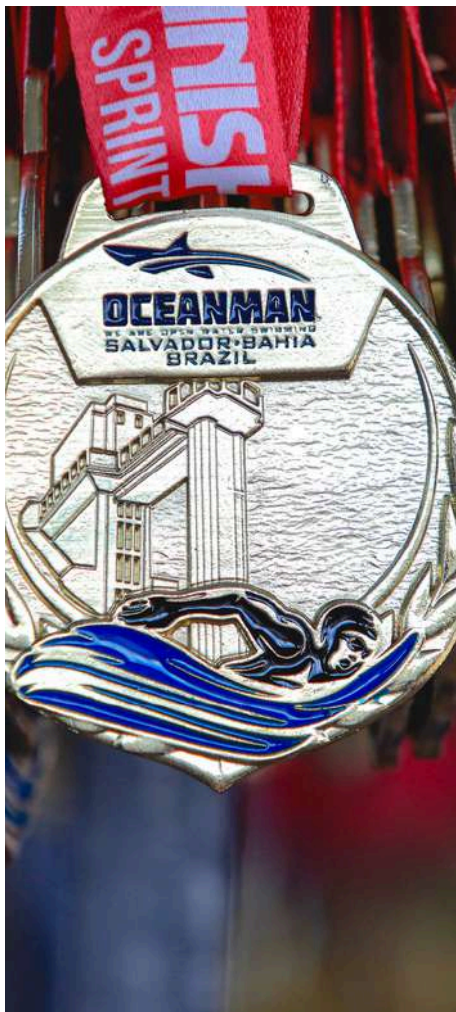
Sharon Van Rouwendaal,  
the GOAT in open water swimming

### Equipment Insights

Neoprene wetsuits Vs. Fastskin  
race suits



# Unleashing the passion for open water



## *Welcome to the second Edition of OCEANMAN Magazine*

In this issue, we take you on a journey through some of the most exciting destinations for open water swimming, including a travel guide to Palermo, Italy. You'll also find exclusive interview with the GOAT of open water, Sharon Van Rouwendaal, fresh off her gold medal victory in Paris, as well as Charin's inspiring story of swimming across the world with OCEANMAN.

We'll showcase fan stories from OCEANMAN Kazakhstan and provide expert tips on swimming techniques to help you improve. You can also explore the latest in swim gear, including Arena's Fastskin technology, and get a glimpse into how OCEANMAN events boost the local economies, focusing on the impact in Cozumel. Dive in and enjoy the latest from the world of open water!

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Dive into these stories and let's continue to celebrate the incredible world of open water swimming together.



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# NEXT RACES

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**06/07 SEPT**  
**OCEANMAN CAM RANH**  
**VIET NAM**



**20/21 SEPT**  
**OCEANMAN DURBAN**  
**SOUTH AFRICA**



**27/28 SEPT**  
**OCEANMAN PALERMO**  
**SICILY, ITALY**



**26/28 SEPT**  
**OCEANMAN EL GOUNA**  
**EGYPT**



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# *The Editorial*

## **CONNECTING PEOPLE AND BUILDING COMMUNITY**

Dear OCEANMAN Friends,

It is with immense gratitude and excitement that I announce the arrival of OCEANMAN Magazine Volume 2. As CEO of OCEANMAN, I have the privilege of reaching out to you through this editorial, as if we were sitting together by our favorite beach, ready to embark on another adventure in the water. It's a great honor to share with you, through these lines, some thoughts and experiences that unite us as the great OCEANMAN family.

I want to take this opportunity to reflect on who we truly are today. I'm not just referring to the races, the destinations, or the goals we pursue, but to something deeper: the essence of what OCEANMAN really is. We are more than just athletes;



Fermin Egido, OCEANMAN CEO

we are human beings, we are a community—the OCEANMAN community. As event organizers, we've had the fortune of working across a wide variety of sports disciplines. However, it's in open water swimming where we've found our true home, our place of belonging. This is where we truly feel comfortable, and it's because of the incredible "human geography" that makes up this community.

Yes, "geography." I'm referring to that mosaic of individuals in swimsuits, each with their own story, their own flag, and their own language, but all sharing something in common: a heart full of passion for open water swimming. Among us, we joke that OCEANMAN is the new NOKIA, because we keep "connecting people," both in and out of the water. And, friends, this has brought us countless personal and collective joys.

## **"We are more than just athletes; we are human beings, we are a community: the OCEANMAN community"**

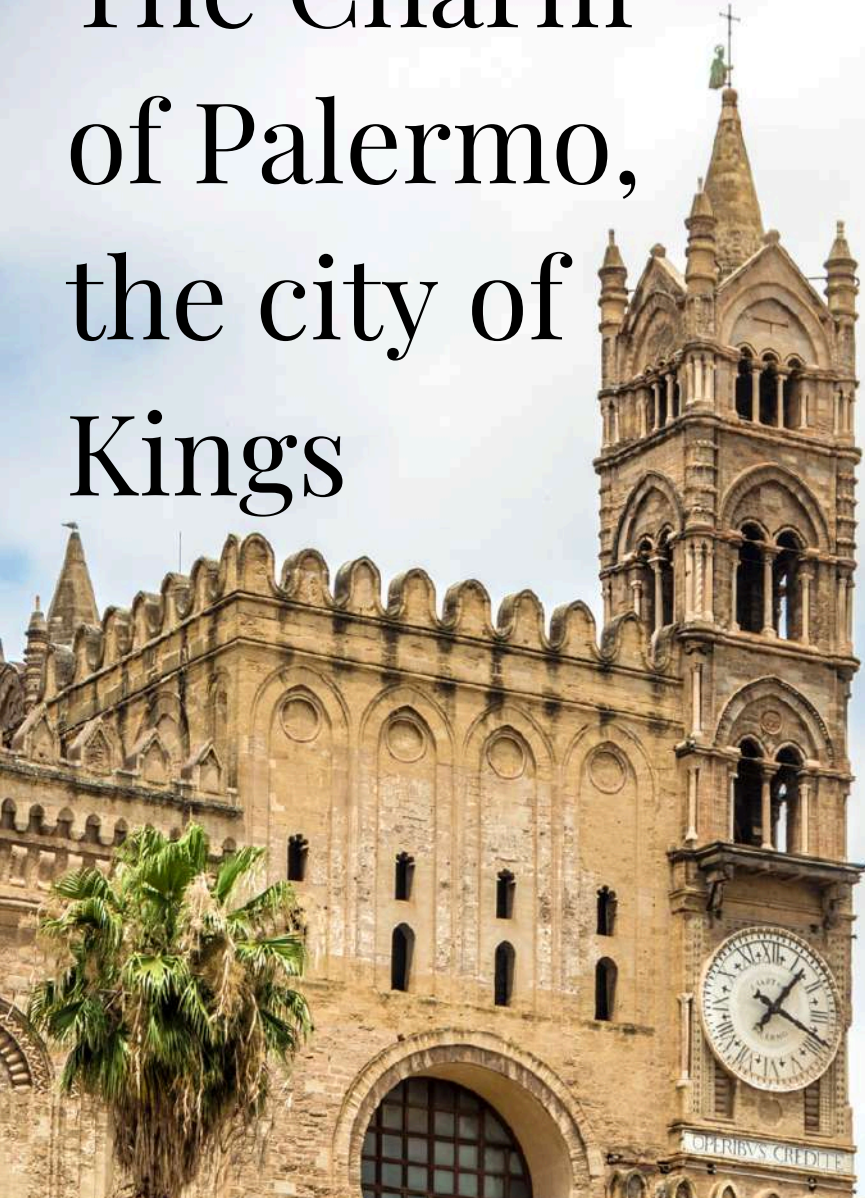
Every time I step on stage during briefings or award ceremonies, I remind everyone to seize the unique opportunity in front of us. At each OCEANMAN event, people from all over the world gather, representing a multitude of nationalities, yet sharing the same spirit and that unmistakable sparkle in their eyes—their love for this sport.

So, dear swimmers, I invite you to continue enjoying every moment, and to keep connecting with one another. Because, at the end of the day, what we truly take with us are the human connections we make, the friends we discover, and the stories we share. See you at the next race, in the water and in the OCEANMAN community!

With gratitude and affection,  
**Fermin Egido**



# The Charm of Palermo, the city of Kings



## *Palermo: A City of History and Beauty*

Palermo, the capital of Sicily, sits on the northern coast of the island like a jewel in the Mediterranean. Known for its vibrant mix of history, culture, and sun-kissed shores, this city is much more than just a destination—it's an experience. With its golden light, crumbling Baroque buildings, and narrow streets bursting with life Palermo is where ancient history meets

the beating heart of modern Italy. Welcome to Palermo, where every street corner, market stall, and beach offers something to discover.

Whether you're a swimmer eager to dive into the Mediterranean or a traveler drawn by the city's rich history, this guide will take you through the must-see spots, local culinary delights, and the best places to stay. Along the way, you'll see why Palermo is a place that will stay with you long after you've left its shores.

# Exploring Palermo: A Timeless Journey

Palermo is known as "La Conca d'Oro"—The Golden Basin—thanks to the fertile valley that surrounds it. The city's history stretches back over 2,700 years, making it one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Europe. Over the centuries, Palermo has been shaped by a succession of cultures—Phoenician, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Norman, and Spanish—each leaving its indelible mark on the city's architecture, food, and way of life.

One of Palermo's most iconic landmarks is the **Palermo Cathedral**, a stunning blend of Arab, Norman, Gothic, and Baroque influences. This cathedral is a testament to the city's complex history, standing proud in the center of town with its majestic towers and intricate mosaics.

For a more somber yet deeply moving experience, visit the **Capuchin Catacombs**. Housing thousands of preserved bodies, these catacombs offer a haunting glimpse into Palermo's past. It's one of the most unique and surreal historical sites in Italy, both fascinating and slightly eerie.

But Palermo is not just about the past. Its present is vibrant and full of life, especially at **Vucciria Market**. Here, you can experience the hustle and bustle of Sicilian street life while sampling local delicacies. From fresh seafood to one of the most typical and famous foods you can find in Palermo: the **arancini** (stuffed rice balls) and **cannoli**, Palermo's street food culture is one of the most celebrated in Italy.







Written by:  
MARK MELDAU

## *Recommendations from local organizer*

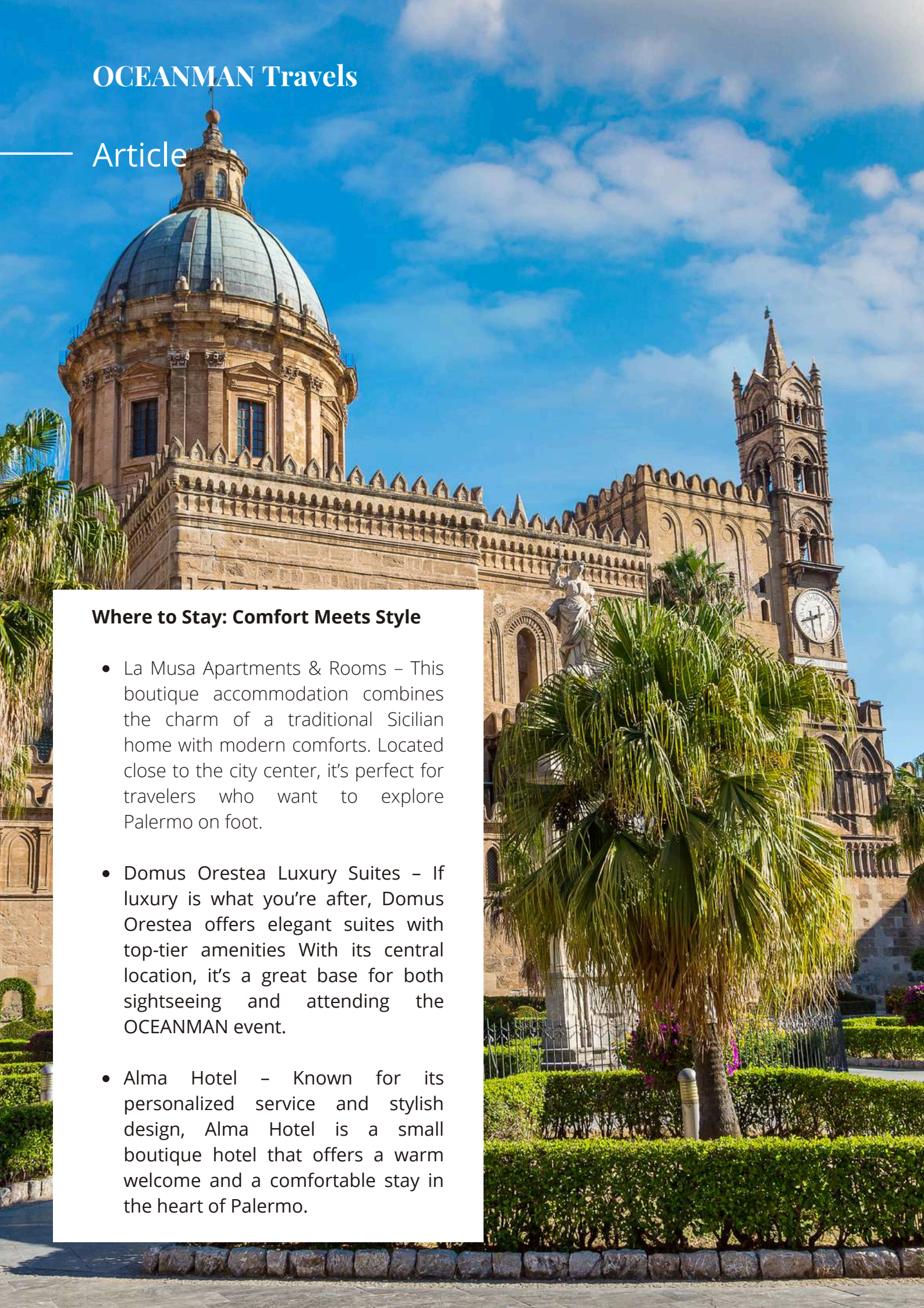
To make the most of your time in Palermo, the local OCEANMAN organizer has handpicked some top spots to eat, stay, and explore.

### **Where to Eat: Palermo's Culinary Gems**

- **Alle Terrazze** – A seaside restaurant known for its fresh seafood and stunning views of the Mediterranean. The perfect place to enjoy a sunset meal after a day of swimming.
- **Sirenetta - Restaurant & Banquet** – Offering a traditional Sicilian menu with a wide variety of local dishes, Sirenetta is a must-visit for anyone wanting to taste the true flavors of Palermo.
- **Rossopomodoro Palermo Mondello** – If you're craving authentic Italian pizza, this is the place to go. Located in Mondello, it's ideal for a meal after enjoying the beach.
- **La Cantinetta Ristorante** – For those looking for a more intimate dining experience, La Cantinetta offers a modern take on traditional Sicilian dishes with a cozy atmosphere.

### Where to Stay: Comfort Meets Style

- La Musa Apartments & Rooms – This boutique accommodation combines the charm of a traditional Sicilian home with modern comforts. Located close to the city center, it's perfect for travelers who want to explore Palermo on foot.
- Domus Orestea Luxury Suites – If luxury is what you're after, Domus Orestea offers elegant suites with top-tier amenities. With its central location, it's a great base for both sightseeing and attending the OCEANMAN event.
- Alma Hotel – Known for its personalized service and stylish design, Alma Hotel is a small boutique hotel that offers a warm welcome and a comfortable stay in the heart of Palermo.





### A City Made for Wanderers

While Palermo's coastline is undeniably beautiful, the city's true magic is in its streets. Take a **Palermo Street Food Tour** to taste your way through the city's bustling markets or join a **No Mafia Walking Tour** to learn about Palermo's fight against organized crime. Both experiences offer a deep dive into the city's complex social fabric and its triumphs over adversity.

For those seeking something more tranquil, there are several boat tours available. A **Full-Day Boat Tour** of Palermo and Mondello lets you explore the coastline from the water, while a **Sunset on a Boat** Tour offers a more relaxed way to end your day, watching the city's skyline bathed in the warm glow of a Sicilian sunset.



## The Waters of Palermo: A Swimmer's Dream

For open water swimmers participating in OCEANMAN, the waters of Palermo offer a rare opportunity to compete in the shadow of history. The sparkling blue waters of the Mediterranean here are as inviting as they are challenging, offering participants the chance to swim in one of the most beautiful coastal areas in Europe.

But the beauty of Palermo doesn't stop at the beach. Head just a few miles north to **Mondello Beach**, a haven for locals and tourists alike. This sandy paradise is framed by the Monte Pellegrino and Monte Gallo mountains, creating a picturesque backdrop for a post-race dip in the sea. Mondello's turquoise waters and palm-lined promenade offer a perfect spot for relaxation after the competition.

Palermo offers a unique blend of sport, culture, and history. As you prepare for OCEANMAN Palermo, don't forget to take time to experience everything the city has to offer. Whether you're swimming in the Mediterranean, exploring ancient cathedrals, or enjoying Sicilian cuisine, Palermo is sure to capture your heart.

The city's streets and shorelines have seen empires rise and fall, and now, they welcome swimmers from around the world to make their mark in its crystal-clear waters. It's not just about the race—it's about being part of the story of Palermo, a city where every street whispers the tales of its glorious past while embracing the vibrant life of today.



Champion Chronicles

Photo by: Pim Ras

# Sharon Van Rouwendaal, the GOAT in open water swimming

Sharon van Rouwendaal, the undisputed queen of open water swimming, has made history once again by securing her third Olympic medal, this time claiming gold in Paris. With a career spanning over a decade and competing in the most challenging events worldwide, Sharon has firmly established herself as the greatest of all time in open water swimming. In this exclusive interview, she opens up about her journey to Olympic triumph, the personal struggles she has faced, and what lies ahead in her remarkable career.

**Q: Sharon, congratulations on winning your third Olympic medal, and this time, a gold in Paris! How does it feel to add another Olympic triumph to your career, especially at such an iconic event?**

**SVR:** "It feels like a dream. I've dreamt of this moment since Doha, where I won two gold medals earlier this year. Going into the Olympics as the favorite was challenging because people placed their bets on me, talking about how it could be

me, Leonie Beck (Germany), or Ana Marcela Cunha (Brazil). I knew people had voted me as a favorite, and going in with that kind of pressure is never nice, but I didn't let it affect me. I also saw people post rankings showing that very few athletes reclaim their gold at the Olympics, meaning someone else usually wins after the original champion. I wanted to reclaim it. And then, to actually make it happen, to come out of the water, it feels like, "Did this really happen?" I still watch the race sometimes and think, "I really did it." I executed the perfect race, using every tactic I've learned over the last 10 years. It was a huge win.

"It feels like a dream... I really did it in a perfect way, in a perfect race. I used every tactic I've learned over the last 10 years, and it was a huge win."

**Q: Paris was a special moment for you, especially with the emotional celebration you dedicated to your dog, Rio. Can you share what that victory meant to you personally and why you chose to honor Rio in that way?**



Photo by: Edwin Smulders

## OCEANMAN Stories

SVR: **“Career-wise, it was the best year of my life, but personally, it was probably the worst** because I lost my dog, Rio. I got Rio before 2016 because living the swimmer’s life can be lonely, and I don’t have a boyfriend. I care a lot about my family and the people close to me, and Rio became my constant companion. I bought a house last year in the Netherlands so we could finally live together because I was always away for training camps. Then he needed surgery due to breathing problems. It was a risk, but he wasn’t breathing well, so I had no choice. They didn’t tell me there could be so many complications afterwards. He passed away on my mom’s lap three days after the surgery, while rushing to the vet. They tried to restart his heart, but it was too late, or maybe he was too tired from the surgery. He hated being in clinics, away from me and my mom.

Afterwards, I didn’t care about swimming. Rio brought me so much happiness. I would come home after winning medals, but **he gave me the feeling of winning every day just by being so happy to see me. I lost 3 kg from the stress**, and I told my dad that if I went back to swimming, I wanted a tattoo of Rio, and I would swim for him, not for me. I got back in the water after 10 days and did a race, where I finished fourth, only one second behind the winner. That gave me the power to train hard for the Olympics because I wanted to win gold for Rio.

Q: **“Your performance in the Seine was outstanding. What was it like to swim in the heart of Paris, with the eyes of the world watching?”**

SVR: “I really enjoyed swimming in the Seine. I trained in it the day before the race, but my biggest competitors didn’t.



Photo by: Pim Ras



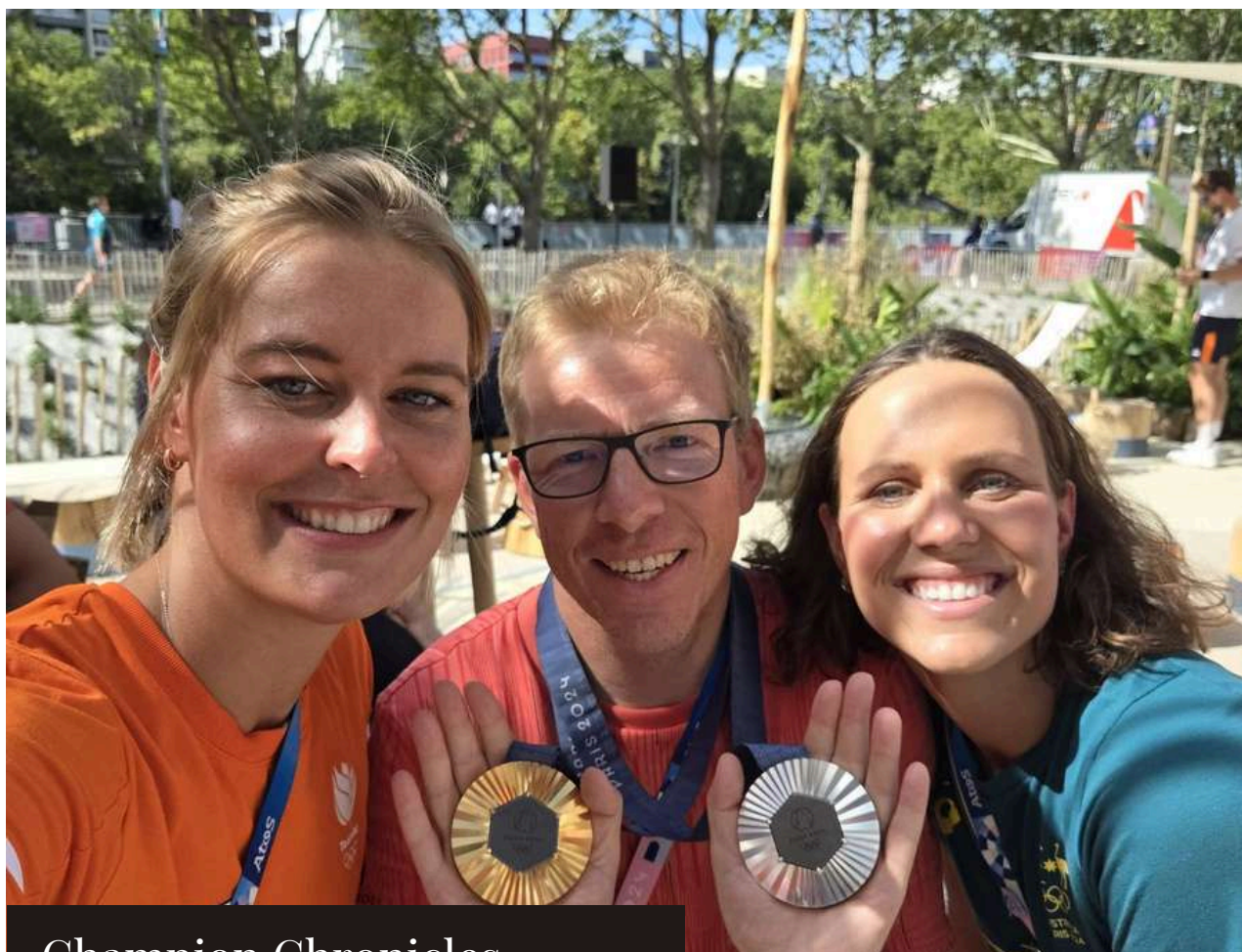
which gave me an advantage because the current was so strong. It made a huge difference knowing where to swim with the current and where to swim against it. After my first training session, I thought, "How are we going to swim six laps tomorrow with this heavy current?" But the adrenaline kicked in, and I just went for it. Everyone was struggling during the first lap, but I knew I was made for a heavy race. The harder it is mentally, the better I perform. I knew my competitors couldn't handle the current, but I kept my head cool and pushed through.

I'm the only woman with three Olympic medals in open water swimming. That shows, under pressure, when it matters most, I'm the best.

**Q: "You've now stood on the Olympic podium three times. How has each of these experiences been different for you, and what did it feel like stepping onto that stage again in Paris?"**

SVR: "Each Olympic medal is different. Rio 2016 was amazing; it was on Copacabana Beach, and there were so many people cheering. Tokyo 2020 was my least favorite because it was during the COVID pandemic, and we swam in hot water, which I don't like.





### Champion Chronicles

I knew Ana Marcela would have an advantage because she loves the heat and comes from Brazil. If the water had been cooler, I think I could have won that one too. But open water swimming is unpredictable, and you have to perform under different conditions. I'm proud that I've shown I'm the best female open water swimmer. I'm the only one with three Olympic medals, and that means a lot. It shows that under pressure, I'm the best. I don't win many World Cups because I use them as training, but I win when it matters—at the World Championships, European Championships, and the Olympics.

**Q: "Your preparation for the Paris Olympics was undoubtedly intense. Can you tell us about your training**

**regimen leading up to the games, and how you stayed physically and mentally ready for such a monumental event?"**

SVR: "Mentally, I'm very strong because I can stay calm and focus only on myself. I go into a tunnel where I don't look at anyone else. Outside of training, I like to watch series or other sports to relax. I arrived in the Olympic Village very late, just four days before my race, to avoid the chaos of the first week when there are so many people and long waits for buses and food. My training routine consists of a 40-minute warm-up, then 2 to 2.5 hours of swimming, followed by 15 minutes of stretching, physio, lunch, and a 2-hour nap.

## OCEANMAN Stories

Then, I do cardio, weights, or core work for an hour before swimming again for 2.5 hours. It's 7-8 hours of training every day, sometimes with a break on Sunday. Before the Olympics, I trained at high altitude for 4.5 weeks, swimming 95 km per week. It was a bit less than the 110 km I swam before Doha in January, but it was enough to arrive mentally and physically strong."

**“My goal now is to coach others, share my experiences, and give back to the sport I love.”**

**Q: Open water swimming is known for its unpredictable nature. How did you prepare yourself for the specific challenges you might face in the Seine, and did the race go as planned, or were there unexpected obstacles?**

SVR: "I trained in Germany, where I lived for four years to train with my German coach. We did a swim in the Elbe River, which also has a strong current, so I practiced using longer strokes with the current and shorter strokes against it. I saw my teammates struggle with the current, but I knew I was good at handling it. Mentally, it's hard because you feel like you're not moving forward, but that's where I had an advantage. I accepted that it was going to be tough and prepared myself. The day before, I did one session in the Seine and knew where the obstacles were, like the



Photo by: Pim Ras

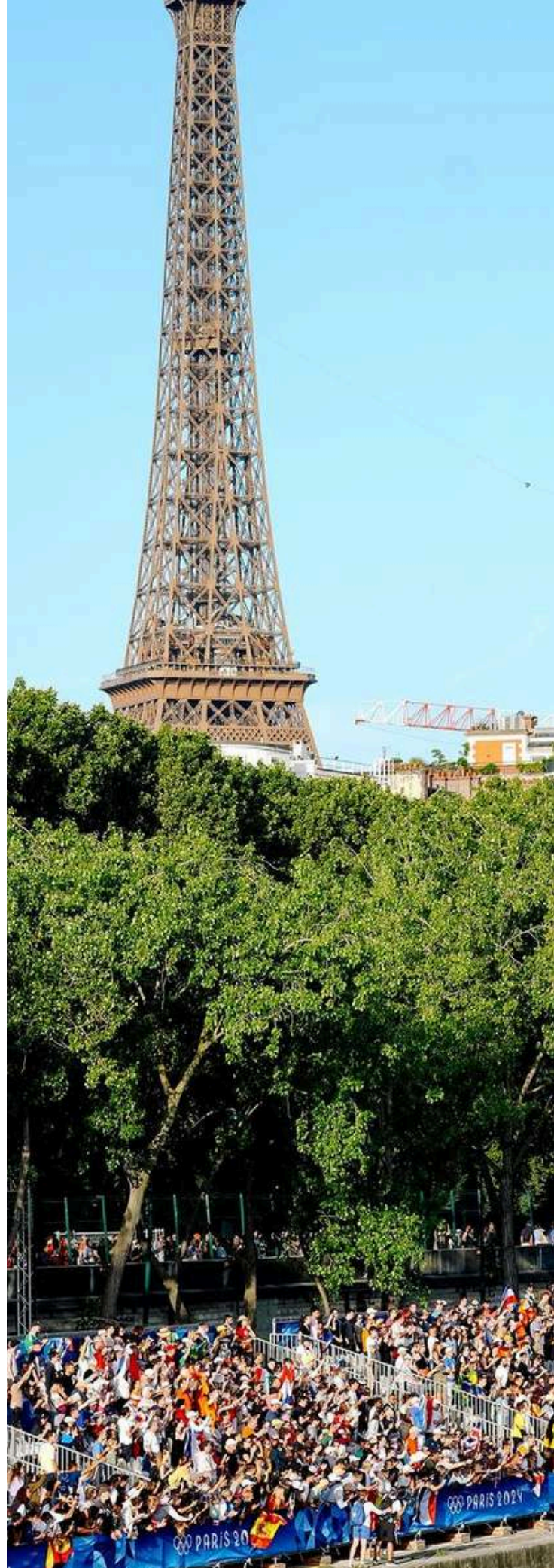
areas with less current. The finish was especially challenging because it was against the current and took double the time to sprint, but I just turned off the pain and focused on what I had to do.”

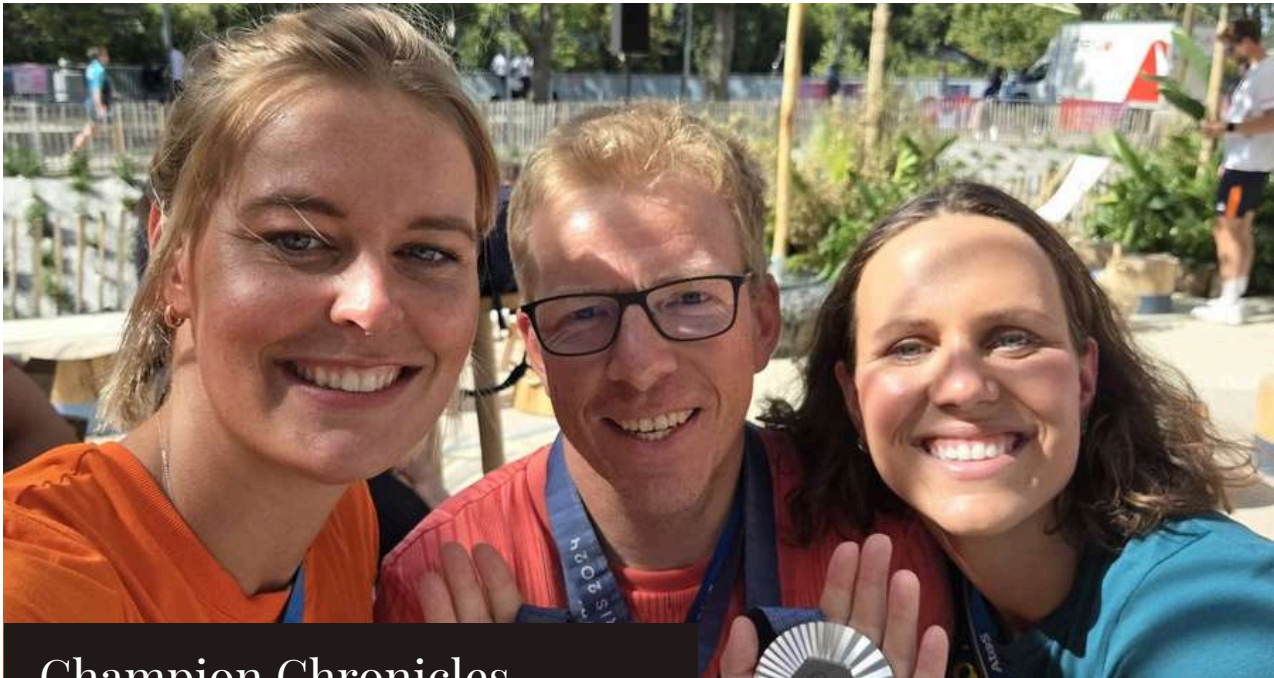
**Q: “This victory solidifies your status as one of the greatest open water swimmers in history. How do you feel about this recognition, and what does it mean to you to be seen as a role model in the sport?”**

SVR: “I’m very happy to be considered a role model now. You can call yourself the GOAT (Greatest of All Time) just like Rafael Nadal, Michael Phelps, or Sarah

“Career-wise, it was the best year of my life, but personally, the worst because I lost my dog, Rio. I wanted to win for him”

Sjöström, and that was my goal. I don’t think anyone will achieve this in the next 8 years. If Ana Marcela wants to get three Olympic medals, she’ll have to swim until she’s 40, which is unlikely. My friend Moesha Johnson might win a medal, but to get three, she’d have to swim for another 8 years. So my name will stay as a role model in this sport, and that’s what I wanted. Now, I get to share my knowledge with others and coach them, and I’m so happy to have started this journey.





### Champion Chronicles

**Q: "Looking ahead, what new challenges and goals do you have after this incredible achievement? Are there any specific races or milestones you're focusing on for the future?"**

SVR: "My future goals are to give clinics with OCEANMAN, provide training sessions, and work with triathletes, open water swimmers, or pool swimmers who want to be coached by me. I want to travel, meet people, and share my experiences. In January, I'll see where I'm at, but for now, I'm not making any decisions about stopping swimming. I want to create my own coaching business, and I'm really happy to be busy with swimming but from a different perspective, as a coach."

**Q: "For young athletes who look up to you, what advice would you give them about pursuing a career in open water swimming and achieving their own dreams?"**

SVR: "To young swimmers, I would say do 4-5 races a year, get experience, and learn about your competitors. Never give up and always believe in yourself. You need to race against your competitors a few times to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and that's how you'll beat them on the big stage. Just keep going, and one day, you'll be on top."

**Q: "You've been at the top of the sport for many years. How do you keep yourself motivated to continue pushing boundaries, especially after already achieving so much in your career?"**

SVR: "When you start winning medals and being on the podium consistently, you want to keep going. I enjoy my training sessions, especially when I surprise myself by getting faster. Recently, I had a few sessions where I was really fast, and that gave me the motivation to keep pushing."



I think for the last 3 months my motivation it was doing it for my dog and show the world how much he meant to me and now I get to have 1.3 million likes about my dog on an Instagram dog account (@weratedogs) with 13 thousand comments, where people are talking about how much important a dog can be and I also got 2 thousand messages privately of people telling their story about their dogs and thanking me. I'm still trying to answer to all these people. It was not my intention, I touched the finish line and I was happy but then the pain came, because since may it was just focus and focus, and it came out when I was on my knees crying and I think people really liked it and it was pure natural actually. People said it showed this tough woman swimming but also emotional. Now I'm going to work also with a charity shelters.

## “You only learn when you lose”

Some people told me “thank you, you made me cry” so it shows that I'm not the only one that cries for their dog. I think what motivated me for the last 3 months was doing it for my dog. But before of course I was already motivated to show the world that I am the best, and that I am the best open water swimmer. Yeah, I don't win all the world cups, let them have the world cups (laughs) I win the competition that needs to be won, the most important competitions and in the other competitions I learn. You only learn when you lose, so I've used this as a learning experience and then you put it into practice on the biggest competition.”

## OCEANMAN Stories

**Q: “Finally, after this historic win in Paris, how do you plan to celebrate and reflect on this moment? And is there anything specific you’d like to say to your fans and supporters who have followed you throughout your journey?”**

**SVR:** “Of course, I want to thank everybody that send me messages and that watched me for their support and nice messages. I’m not really celebrating yet, I’ve celebrated with just going out to dinner, but these next week I have a lot of meetings and I’m going to do a lot of work related stuff for coaching, I’ll be coaching here in the Netherlands as well on the weekend.

“Never give up and always believe in yourself. Just keep going, and one day, you’ll be on top.”

There’s a lot of work to be done so I’m planning on having holidays may be on November, but now I’m just focused on the next steps.”



Photo by: Pim Ras

# CREATING A BETTER SWIMMING EXPERIENCE



THEMAGIC<sup>5</sup>

# Mastering the elements:

# Building Resilience



Written by:  
**JOSE LUIS LARROSA**

In open water swimming, the ability to handle diverse and unpredictable conditions is vital. Unlike the controlled environment of a pool, open water presents a range of challenges including shifting currents, waves, temperature fluctuations, and visibility issues. Building resilience to these conditions can significantly enhance your performance and confidence. Here's a closer look at how to train effectively for varied conditions and some practical exercises to help you prepare.

### Understanding the challenge

Open water swims expose swimmers to a wide array of environmental variables. To thrive, you must not only develop physical endurance but also adapt to changing conditions. This involves training your body to handle discomfort and your mind to stay focused despite external factors. Here's how you can build resilience:





## Current Simulation Training



**Objective:** Adapt to swimming against and with currents to enhance your ability to navigate varying water movements.

### How to Do It:

- Find a Suitable Location: Swim in a river or a lake where currents are present, or use a swim tether in a pool to simulate resistance.
- Workouts: Swim against the current for set intervals, such as 5-10 minutes, focusing on maintaining a steady pace and good technique.
- Rest and Recovery: Follow each interval with a period of swimming with the current or in still water to recover and prepare for the next set.
- Variation: Increase the intensity and duration of the current intervals over time to build strength and adaptability.

## Wave Exposure Training



**Objective:** Build comfort and technique for swimming in choppy or wavy conditions.

### How to Do It:

- Open Water Sessions: Choose days with varying wave conditions. Aim to swim in choppy waters or during windy conditions to experience different wave patterns.
- Drills: Practice bilateral breathing (breathing on both sides) to handle waves from different directions. Incorporate sighting drills to maintain direction despite the waves.
- Gradual Exposure: Start with smaller waves and gradually increase to more challenging conditions as your comfort and skill improve.

## Temperature Adaptation Drills



**Objective:** Acclimate your body to different water temperatures to reduce shock and enhance comfort.

### How to Do It:

- Cold Water Training: Swim in colder water when possible, or use an ice bath before or after your swim to simulate cold conditions.
- Warm Water Training: Swim in warmer water or take hot showers to simulate high-temperature conditions. Ensure you stay hydrated to manage heat effectively.
- Progressive Exposure: Gradually increase the time spent in colder or warmer water to build tolerance and comfort.

## Night and Low Visibility Training



**Objective:** Enhance your ability to swim effectively in low light or murky conditions.

### How to Do It:

- Early Morning or Late Evening Swims: Swim at dawn or dusk to practice in low light conditions. Use bright swim caps or goggles with built-in lights to simulate poor visibility.
- Murky Water Sessions: Swim in lakes or areas with poor visibility to mimic conditions where you can't see the bottom or other swimmers clearly.
- Techniques: Practice sighting and navigation skills, focusing on finding and following landmarks or buoys even when visibility is limited.



# SWIMMING THE WORLD: MY JOURNEY WITH OCEANMAN

Written by:

CHARIN CHEUNGSIRAKULVIT



**Hello, OCEANMAN Family!**

**My name is Charin, and I'm from Bangkok, Thailand. It's been an incredible journey being part of the OCEANMAN community since the very beginning of its global expansion, and today, I'm honored to share my story with you.**

How did I first hear about OCEANMAN? A close friend in Thailand once gave me some memorable advice about excelling in different sports:

- If you want to be a good runner – run the marathon majors
- If you want to be a good cyclist – conquer Audax
- If you want to be a good triathlete – tackle Ironman
- And if you want to be a good swimmer – embrace OCEANMAN.

That was my introduction to the OCEANMAN world.

I started swimming in my hometown of Sisaket as a young boy. As I grew older, my first taste of open water swimming came during my university years, where I participated in local swimathons in Pattaya. From those early races, my passion only grew. Soon, I found myself competing in a 12km charity swim across the islands. From there, I joined regional events in Southeast Asia, and eventually, I dove into the world of OCEANMAN, competing in events all over the globe: Malaysia, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Greece, Mexico, the UAE, Kazakhstan, and Turkey. My races spanned distances of 5 to 10 kilometers, each presenting its own challenges and rewards.

The longest and most demanding race of my career came during OCEANMAN Madeira in Portugal—a 30km swim that tested my endurance, both mentally and physically.

### ***Lessons learned:***

**“You have to prepare yourself for all the changes, be ready.”**

Each OCEANMAN event has been a unique experience, teaching me about different water conditions, weather patterns, and, most importantly, human resilience. The ocean is unpredictable, and every race is a reminder that you need to be ready for whatever comes your way.



# OCEANMAN Voices



## SWIMMING THE WORLD

I'd like to share two significant experiences that shaped my OCEANMAN journey:

- **ULTRAOCEANMAN in Tabarca, Spain:**

This race was one of the toughest I've ever faced. The weather was cold, the currents were strong, and the stormy conditions made it difficult to move forward. But I learned something invaluable: in those moments when your body wants to give up, your mindset becomes your greatest ally. Perseverance and mental strength are key to surviving the most challenging parts of open water swimming.

- **OCEANMAN Phuket, Thailand:**

Recently, I had the privilege of escorting my friend Rodion from Kazakhstan during the OCEANMAN event in Phuket. Even though we didn't speak the same language, we connected through our shared love of swimming. Rodion's journey was truly inspiring. He swam not only for himself but for everyone who has ever doubted themselves. His dedication was a reminder of what OCEANMAN stands for—breaking barriers, chasing dreams, and proving that anyone can overcome their fears and limitations.

Aside from racing, I've also become a part of the CAMP open water swimming group,

where we promote ocean conservation—an effort closely aligned with OCEANMAN's mission to protect the waters we swim in. Together, we hope to inspire others to respect and care for our oceans.

I'm not a professional swimmer, nor have I stood on the podium, but I've learned a few key lessons that I'd like to share with all swimmers out there:

- Take small, consistent steps toward your goals – Passion and discipline will guide you further than you think.
- Safety always comes first – Even for seasoned swimmers, never underestimate the importance of swimming safely.
- Enjoy the journey – Don't forget to savor every moment in the water. Swimming is not just a sport; it's an experience to cherish.

## ***My life goal:***

"You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have."

My ultimate goal is simple: I want to swim the world, sharing my story and inspiring others along the way. I live by the mantra: "Inspire and be inspired."



OCEANMAN Community

# 1,400 swimmers, one unforgettable race: The rise of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan



OCEANMAN Kazakhstan made history this year with over 1,400 swimmers taking part, marking it as one of the largest OCEANMAN events ever.

Held in the pristine waters of Lake Kapchagay, the event not only highlighted the growing popularity of open water swimming in Kazakhstan but also brought together participants from all over the world, reinforcing the global community that OCEANMAN has cultivated over the years.

Among the many voices that defined this event, Ayaulym Mashtiyeva, a dedicated swimmer from Kazakhstan, shared her personal experience, offering a glimpse into the heart of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan



OCEANMAN Community

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WE ARE OPEN TO ALL SWIMMING  
KAZAKHSTAN



27-2  
2

## The rise of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan



114	Mashtiyeva Aya	Master 30 – 39_F	3:38:20
724	Gilim Abzal	Master 40 – 49_M	2:55:51
130	Ergashev Farrukhjon	Master 40 – 49_M	3:29:06
696	Baranovskaya Gulfiya	Master 50 – 59_F	2:50:27

AYA MASHTIYEVA

### *Aya's Journey: Perseverance in the Face of Challenges*

"OCEANMAN Kazakhstan is the largest open water sport event in our country, and it's a great honor for me to participate," Ayaulym said, reflecting on her experience. Her journey began in March, as she gradually increased her training volume in preparation for the event. Like many swimmers, Ayaulym knew that the road to race day would be tough but rewarding, filled with hours of practice, dedication, and the occasional struggle.

For Ayaulym, the event was more than just a race; it was an opportunity to

reconnect with fellow swimmers from across Kazakhstan. "It's always a funny and exciting experience," she shared. "You get to meet many familiar faces and friends from other cities." The camaraderie and shared passion for the sport created an atmosphere of support and motivation, pushing each swimmer to their best performance.

However, no race is without its challenges. Ayaulym recalled the most difficult part of the race—starting the second lap under the intense heat and battling the waves. "It was very hot, and the waves had picked up. Quitting wasn't an option, so I kept swimming," she said.





## The rise of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan

### *A Celebration of the OCEANMAN Spirit*

Ayaulym's story is just one of many that capture the essence of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan: perseverance, community, and the drive to improve. Her experience, echoed by countless others at the event, reflects the spirit of OCEANMAN that has brought swimmers from all walks of life together—each with their own goals, challenges, and stories.

#### **Favorite Moments from the Participants**

Throughout the event, swimmers and spectators alike were eager to share their favorite moments:

- Elena, from Almaty: "It's always exciting to compete in such a large event. The organization was fantastic, and the energy of the crowd cheering at the finish line was incredible. I've never felt more accomplished."
- Sergey, from Astana: "My favorite part was the view from the water. Lake Kapshagay is stunning, and swimming surrounded by such beauty made the race unforgettable. I'll definitely be back next year!"
- Marie, from France: "This was my first time racing in Kazakhstan, and the experience was overwhelming in the best way. I met so many kind and passionate people who welcomed me as part of the OCEANMAN family. I'll carry these memories with me to my next races."

## The rise of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan

### *Looking Ahead*

With such a successful turnout, OCEANMAN Kazakhstan has undoubtedly become a staple event on the OCEANMAN calendar. It exemplifies the growing passion for open water swimming in Central Asia and serves as a testament to the dedication and perseverance of the athletes who participate. For many, it's not just about winning, but about the journey, the friendships, and the personal achievements along the way.

As we look forward to more exciting events on the OCEANMAN calendar, including UltraOCEANMAN Palermo and the World Final in Dubai, the legacy of OCEANMAN Kazakhstan will undoubtedly inspire future participants to take the plunge and join this incredible global community.

Here's to more unforgettable races, incredible stories, and the ever-growing OCEANMAN family.



# Neoprene Wetsuits vs. Open Water Race Suits

When it comes to open water swimming, the right gear can make all the difference between a good race and a great one. In cold waters or challenging conditions, neoprene wetsuits are essential for maintaining warmth, buoyancy, and speed. Meanwhile, for warmer waters, open water race suits, engineered for pure hydrodynamics, come into play. This article explores the key features of these performance-enhancing suits, with a special focus on the cutting-edge innovations from the iconic brand Arena.

## **The Importance of Neoprene Wetsuits in Open Water Swimming**

Neoprene wetsuits are more than just a means of keeping warm in cold water—they are engineered to enhance a swimmer's buoyancy, positioning in the water, and hydrodynamics. These suits trap a thin layer of water between the body and the neoprene material, which is then warmed by the body to maintain core temperature. This balance of warmth and buoyancy is especially crucial for long-distance races like OCEANMAN events, where exposure to the elements can significantly impact performance.



## Equipment Insights

For athletes looking for flexibility, speed, and comfort, modern wetsuits offer features like:

- **Varying Thickness:** Neoprene suits typically range in thickness from 1mm to 5mm, with thinner sections placed around the arms and shoulders for better movement and thicker panels in the core for extra buoyancy.
- **Hydrophobic Finish:** Many high-end wetsuits include finish on the external surface to reduce drag, allowing swimmers to glide more smoothly through the water.
- **Streamlined Fit:** The snug fit of a wetsuit designed for swimming minimizes water intake and helps maintain the swimmer's streamlined and higher position in the water.

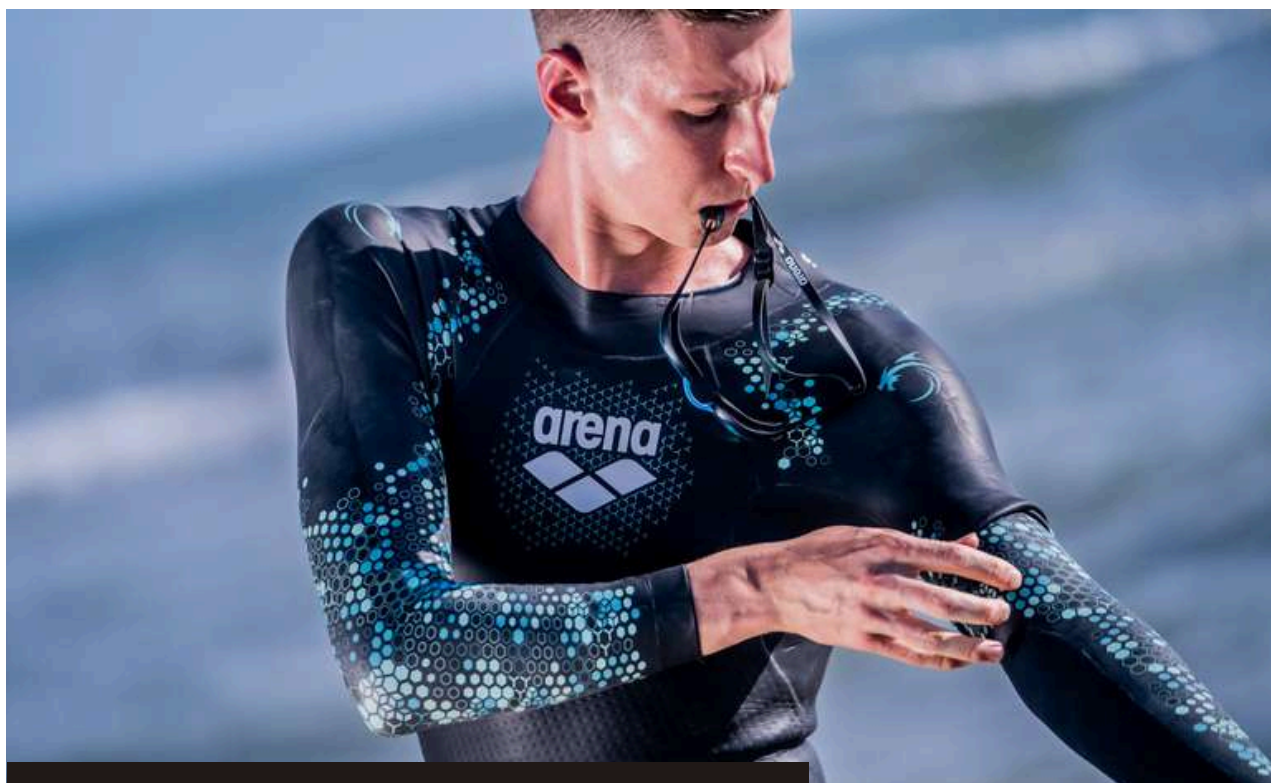


Photo by: Arena

## Neoprene vs. Open water race suit

### Neoprene vs. Open water race suit: Which Suit is Right for You?

When choosing between a neoprene wetsuit and an open water race suit, it ultimately depends on the water temperature and race conditions. In colder environments, the insulating properties of neoprene are crucial for maintaining body heat and buoyancy. Whilst an Airlock technology integrated into the wetsuit (providing additional buoyancy) ensures that your body remains in an ideal position in the water in rough and choppy conditions. However, in warmer waters, an open water race suit offers unrestricted flexibility and range of motion, reducing the risk of fatigue, yet still provides good hydrodynamics, by maintaining stability and body alignment during the stroke. This makes it ideal for sprint distances and high-velocity races.

### Tips for Choosing the Perfect Suit

- **Know the Water Temperature:** If you're racing in colder waters (below 18°C), a neoprene wetsuit is necessary for thermal protection. For warmer water (above 18°C), consider switching to an open water race suit.
- **Test Your Gear:** Practice swimming in both types of suits before your race to ensure you're comfortable and have adjusted to the specific fit and feel of the material.
- **Fit is Key:** Whether it's a wetsuit or race suit, a snug fit is essential. Too loose, and water will drag you down. Too tight, and your range of motion could be compromised.

## Arena Top Recommendations

### STORM WETSUIT



The Storm wetsuit is made of 100% limestone Yamamoto SCS neoprene, a type of neoprene with reduced environmental impact. The different thicknesses of neoprene ensure maximum freedom of movement when swimming and optimum buoyancy.

Airlock technology incorporated in the wetsuit keeps your body in an ideal position in the water, while the new neckline is designed to provide maximum comfort and no chafing. The special double-layer construction on the forearms allows a more efficient catch phase during the arm stroke and better sensations in the water. Thanks to the thinner and highly elastic neoprene around the wrists and ankles you can put on and take off the wetsuit quickly.

This wetsuit has been approved for FINA, ITU, Ironman and USAT races.

### THUNDER WETSUIT



Powerskin Thunder wetsuit was conceived in an effort to understand the essence of what open water swimming beginners need from a wetsuit. We utilized our proven legacy and experience in the sport to provide novices with a clear-cut solution to their racing needs. The Powerskin Thunder technology combines all the essentials of a high-performing wetsuit: optimal flexibility, buoyancy, insulation and comfort.

This men's wetsuit exclusively uses a Yamamoto limestone neoprene: the extreme flexibility of this quality material and the strategic thickness distribution of the neoprene translate to a wide range of motion and unrestricted feel that facilitates the swimmers' natural movements.

The Thunder wetsuit also features a low-profile collar that prevents chafing, 100% waterproof double-blind stitched seams and an improved zipper closure for a secure seal.

Be ready for your next race with this FINA, World Triathlon (ITU), Ironman, & USAT approved design.

## Arena Top Recommendations

### Powerskin Revo+ OW



Powerskin® R-EVO+OW is the latest innovation in the Arena Powerskin family, designed for open water racing swimming. Made with a 100% textile material, Powerskin® R-EVO+OW allows the swimmer to keep superb stability and body alignment during the stroke.

Thanks to the high-tech Z-Raptor+ fabric, all Powerskin® R-EVO+OW range suits guarantee maximum compression combined with unmatched comfort. Powerskin® R-EVO+OW range features the advanced bonded seams system that allows low profiled, bonded seams. Powerskin® R-EVO+ OW is designed for open water racing swimming.

### ARENA AQUAVENTURE



The arena Aquaventure full body wetsuit is ready for your next open water adventure. Whether swimming, windsurfing, sailing, kayaking or maybe even all of the above is your thing, this design will give you the insulation, buoyancy and comfort you need to enjoy your favourite sport for longer. The thickness of the neoprene varies from 2mm on the arms and legs for more flexibility to 3mm around the torso for extra buoyancy and support. The rubber-like surface of the Smoothskin torso is water and wind resistant and keeps you warm where it matters most. The flat neckline is soft against the skin and the double blindstitched seams are waterproof and elasticated. This versatile wetsuit is easy to put on and take off by pulling the back zip.

The new arena Aquaventure Shorty men's wetsuit is the perfect combination of flexibility, comfort and insulation for temperatures between 19 and 23° C.

No blocks, no lanes.  
Just the open water.  
Florian Wellbrock

**POWERSKIN  
STORM**



**THE WETSUIT  
OF CHAMPIONS.**

50 years of scientific research in the field of hydrodynamics has cumulated into one ultimate wetsuit: the new POWERSKIN STORM. Designed in collaboration with elite athletes, its groundbreaking technology provides unparalleled buoyancy without the need to compromise on flexibility, comfort, or insulation.

[arenasport.com](http://arenasport.com)



OCEANMAN Swim Camp

Article

# Swim, Explore, and Improve: Discover OCEANMAN Swim Camps

At OCEANMAN, we're excited to announce our partnership with Olympic gold medalist and three-time Olympic medalist Sharon van Rouwendaal to bring a unique and exclusive opportunity for swimmers worldwide: **OCEANMAN Swim Camps**.

This exciting project invites swimmers of all levels to train with one of the greatest open water swimmers of all time, providing them with the chance to refine their skills, learn expert techniques, and get closer to achieving their own swimming dreams.

Swim Camps offer a fully immersive training experience in stunning open-water locations. These camps are designed for athletes who want to challenge themselves, learn from one of the sport's best, and take their swimming skills to the next level. Participants will benefit from Sharon's vast expertise in open water swimming, endurance training, race tactics, and mental preparation. Sharon aims to share the secrets behind her incredible success, including the strategic approaches and mental toughness required to compete.

# Why Join the Swim Camps?

Swimmers will have the rare chance to learn from an Olympic gold medalist who has spent over a decade competing against the world's best. Sharon's methodical approach to preparation, from technique to endurance training and mental focus, is something only a few have ever experienced firsthand.

## Customized Coaching

Swimmers will receive personalized attention and feedback tailored to their unique strengths and goals. Sharon will work directly with participants to ensure they leave the camp with new insights, refined techniques, and improved performance. These camps are set in some of the world's most breathtaking coastal and open-water destinations, allowing swimmers to combine intensive training with the natural beauty of their surroundings.

## Meet Like-Minded Swimmers

These camps are more than just a training ground; they offer a fantastic opportunity to connect with other passionate swimmers from around the world. Whether you're an amateur enthusiast or an aspiring professional, you'll find a supportive and motivating environment to push your limits.

Swim Camps are open to swimmers of all levels, from beginners to experienced athletes. The camps are tailored to meet the needs of each participant, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their experience, gets the most out of their time with Sharon. Whether you're aiming for a personal best in a race or simply want to improve your technique and stamina, these camps will help you unlock your potential.



## Beautiful Open-Water Locations

### ***El Gouna, Egypt***

Nestled along the Red Sea, El Gouna is a breathtaking resort town known for its crystal-clear waters and vibrant marine life. The perfect destination for open-water swimming, El Gouna offers participants the chance to train in warm, calm seas surrounded by stunning desert landscapes. This exotic location provides a mix of challenging open-water conditions and luxurious resort amenities, ensuring an unforgettable experience.

### ***Ibiza, Spain***

Famous for its lively atmosphere and beautiful coastlines, Ibiza offers more than just nightlife. This Mediterranean island is a swimmer's paradise, with its clear, turquoise waters and diverse coastal terrain. Participants will enjoy both scenic swims and intensive training sessions in one of Europe's most picturesque locations, making Ibiza an ideal blend of relaxation and performance.

### ***Curaçao***

Located in the heart of the Caribbean, Curaçao boasts pristine beaches and vibrant coral reefs, making it an idyllic spot for open-water swimming. The island's warm, tropical climate and calm waters offer the perfect setting for focused training, while the colorful local culture and charming towns provide a unique and enriching travel experience.

### ***Ayia Napa, Cyprus***

Known for its golden beaches and azure waters, Ayia Napa is a stunning location on the southeastern coast of Cyprus. With its sheltered bays and favorable weather conditions, this destination offers excellent open-water swimming opportunities in the Mediterranean. Combine challenging swim sessions with the beauty of Cyprus's landscapes.

### ***Dubai, UAE***

Dubai offers a unique blend of modern luxury and cultural heritage, making it an exceptional destination for swim enthusiasts. Training in the warm waters of the Arabian Gulf, surrounded by the iconic skyline, provides a perfect setting to challenge your skills. Dubai's world-class facilities and year-round sunshine, combined with its vibrant city life, make this Swim Camp an unforgettable experience.

# What to Expect at the Camps

- **Expert Coaching from Sharon van Rouwendaal**

Sharon will guide participants through intensive daily sessions, including both open-water and pool training.

- **Race Simulation and Strategy**

Experience race-like conditions and develop strategies that have helped Sharon dominate at the highest levels.

- **Technique and Endurance Training**

Learn the technical aspects of swimming, from stroke efficiency to breathing techniques, as well as the endurance needed for long-distance swims.

- **Tourist activities**

Participants will engage with local communities, savor authentic local cuisine, and explore the region's vibrant traditions and historic sites.

Each day brings new adventures on land and sea, ensuring a fully rounded and enriching experience.

- **Mental Preparation**

Discover the mental strategies Sharon uses to stay focused and calm under pressure, helping you improve your performance in high-stress environments.



### ***Why Sharon Van Rouwendaal?***

Sharon van Rouwendaal is more than just a world-class swimmer—she’s a passionate mentor who loves sharing her knowledge with aspiring swimmers. With multiple world titles, three Olympic medals, and a wealth of experience in open-water competition, Sharon is one of the most respected figures in the sport. Her personal journey, marked by resilience, hard work, and dedication, serves as an inspiration to swimmers everywhere.

Her Swim Camps are an extension of her commitment to the sport, providing a rare opportunity to learn from one of the best. Sharon’s hands-on approach ensures that each participant leaves the camp with not only improved skills but also renewed motivation and a deeper understanding of what it takes to succeed in open-water swimming.



# OCEANMAN Cozumel: An economic catalyst for local tourism

### *Economic Impact through Hotel Occupancy and Tourism*

With over 1,100 athletes participating in this year's edition, Cozumel once again demonstrated the profound economic impact that global sporting events can bring to tourism-driven economies. The influx of visitors was not limited to the competitors alone—each swimmer brought an average of 2.7 companions, translating into over 4,000 visitors pouring into the island for the duration of the event.

Cozumel, already a popular tourist destination known for its pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters, and marine biodiversity, experienced an additional surge in tourism significantly boosting hotel occupancy rates across the island. With each participant staying an average of 4.5 nights, local hotels reported near-capacity bookings. The local hospitality industry was able to capitalize on this influx.

# Local Businesses thrive with increased visitor footfall

Cozumel's local economy, heavily dependent on tourism, was further buoyed by the ancillary spending from visitors. According to the local tourism board, each participant and their companions spent generously on food, shopping, entertainment, and leisure activities outside the competition. With over 4,000 additional visitors on the island, restaurants, bars, and cafes were buzzing with activity. From street vendors to upscale dining establishments, businesses saw a sharp rise in customer traffic, especially near popular tourist areas such as the San Miguel downtown and waterfront zones.

According to reports from the Cozumel Hotel Association, the island saw an estimated 8,500 additional overnight

stays during the event, providing a critical boost during the summer travel season. With average nightly rates ranging from \$150 to \$300 per room, the economic infusion into the hospitality sector alone was substantial.

The average 4.5-night stay not only provided immediate economic benefits but also created long-term opportunities for businesses that gained exposure to international tourists who may return for future vacations. This dynamic creates a virtuous cycle, where the initial draw of a sports event fosters repeat tourism and increases Cozumel's visibility. The economic benefits extended even to Cozumel's transportation sector. Taxi drivers, rental car companies experienced increased demand.





## Building Long-Term Economic Growth

OCEANMAN Cozumel, while a competition at its core, serves as a powerful promotional tool for the island's broader tourism industry. The event's global reach, with participants from over 50 countries, brings diverse visitors to the island, many of whom may not have considered Cozumel as a destination before the race. By attracting international athletes and their companions, the event promotes Cozumel as not only a sports destination but also a rich cultural and leisure hub.

The short-term economic benefits of OCEANMAN Cozumel are clear, but the event also offers long-term potential for sustainable growth. By positioning Cozumel as a top-tier destination for international sports tourism, the island attracts high-spending visitors who are likely to return for future vacations. Local businesses, particularly those in the tourism and hospitality sectors, have the

opportunity to establish lasting relationships with these visitors, encouraging them to come back for leisure trips or other sporting events.

Additionally, OCEANMAN serves as a showcase for Cozumel's capacity to host large-scale international events, which could open the door to other sporting competitions or cultural festivals in the future. The successful execution of the event enhances Cozumel's reputation as a well-organized, welcoming, and desirable destination for both athletes and tourists.

The event also underscores the importance of diversifying Cozumel's tourism offerings. While the island has long been known for its beaches and scuba diving, OCEANMAN demonstrates that there is substantial demand for sports and adventure tourism.



### *The success of OCEANMAN Cozumel 2024*

OCEANMAN Cozumel 2024 provided a much-needed boost to the island's economy, with over 1,100 swimmers and their 2.7 companions each contributing to an estimated 8,500 additional overnight stays and increased spending in local businesses.

By harnessing the potential of international sports events like OCEANMAN, Cozumel can continue to strengthen its economic resilience, boost local employment, and promote its unique cultural and natural offerings on the global stage. The island's ability to attract and host such events not only underscores its appeal but also highlights the symbiotic relationship between sports tourism and economic development, offering a blueprint for other destinations to follow.



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