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Editor's word

Once again, summer is upon us and the Monaco Yacht Show is just around the corner. With a remarkable line-up of yacht launches this year, the event promises to unveil more novelties than we have seen in many seasons – and I suspect a few last-minute additions will keep us on our toes. Released in early August, you can find the list of attending yachts on page 42

Earlier this year, Justin Ratcliffe made a special journey to the United States, visiting some of the country's most renowned shipyards along the West Coast. His full tour is captured in Go West, Young Man on page 10.

I also had the pleasure of sitting down with one of the industry's most respected figures, Peter Lürssen, to discuss the challenges facing the sector and his vision for redefining the future of yacht construction – continuing the legacy of innovation established by his forebears. You will find our conversation on page 14.

On a more personal note, I was honoured to interview my friends Jim Sluitjer and Bernd Weel for their first industry feature since co-founding their new design studio, Weel Sluitjer, last year. Their story begins on page 32.

Finally, do not miss the tale of *Maia*, the striking new 53-metre motor sailer created by brothers Filip and Luka Jakir, who are proudly carrying forward their family's tradition of yacht building in Croatia. Turn to page 64 for the full feature.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the SY/T newspaper, and I look forward to catching up with you during the September shows.

Editor in Chief,
Francesca Webster

Francesca Webster



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TIMES

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TOM VAN OOSSANEN

Weel Sluitjer: Design's New Power Pairing p. 32

Two acclaimed Dutch designers join forces to launch Weel Sluitjer, a bold new studio already making waves in the 50-metre-plus market. Francesca Webster sits down with the duo to find out more.



UNSPLASH | THOM MILKOVIC

Go West Young Man p. 10

Once a dominant force on the global superyacht scene, American shipyards have dwindled significantly over the past decade or so. To understand how the industry is adapting, we travelled to Seattle and Vancouver – two hubs of Pacific Northwest boatbuilding with deep maritime roots. By Justin Ratcliffe.



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Ilia Rigas shares the story of her life aboard the Perini Navi sailing yacht *Almyra II* and the origin of the Cyclades Cup Regatta. By Francesca Webster.

Regulations in Japan p. 54

Enrico Chhibber speaks with Japan-based yachting experts to explore recent regulatory reforms and infrastructure developments that are gradually positioning Japan as a more accessible and appealing destination for superyachts.



Chartering new waters with Jeff Druke p. 8

Jeff Druke on the origins and evolution of Outer Reef Yachts, expansion into Europe and plans for bigger yachts. By Francesca Webster.

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Charting New Waters

Jeff Druke on the origins and evolution of Outer Reef Yachts, expansion into Europe and plans for even bigger yachts.
By **Francesca Webster**.



OUTER REEF

Founder of Outer Reef Yachts, Jeff Druke, reflects on a maritime journey that began with commercial fishing and led to the foundation of one of the American industry’s favourite long-range cruiser brands. In this exclusive conversation, he discusses the brand’s foundations, his strategic expansion into Europe, and how a shifting clientele is reshaping Outer Reef’s future.

Jeff, your path into yacht building is quite unconventional. Can you tell us how your early career led to the founding of Outer Reef Yachts?

It all started somewhat unintentionally. Before I ever considered yacht building, I was a lifelong boater – a true boat rat. My commercial fishing background gave me a deep appreciation for trawler-style vessels. After many years of building custom homes in the Hamptons, I found myself shopping for a long-range cruiser, something beyond the 30 to 50-foot sport yachts I owned. I was seriously considering a Fleming, which at the time was one of the industry leaders. But as a custom home builder, I was baffled by the lack of flexibility in yacht design – it reminded me of Henry Ford’s famous line: “You can have any colour you want, as long as it’s black.” So, I made the bold – and somewhat naïve – decision to build my own boat. It was never intended to become a business. But the first 60-foot yacht I built attracted interest right away and sold at a boat show. I made a modest profit and decided to build a second, a 75-footer, which also sold quickly. What began as a passion project evolved into Outer Reef Yachts, which has now been going strong for over 25 years.

Outer Reef builds in Taiwan – why did you choose to base production there?

Taiwan has long been the benchmark for building long-range cruisers. Most of the major players – Fleming, Nordhavn, Kroger – have or had a presence there. The build quality and value for money are exceptional, and we’ve worked with the same shipyard for well over two decades. Though costs have risen, the consistency and craftsmanship remain top-tier. I don’t own the facility – like most in the industry, we subcontract, which has been a recognisable model since the 1970s.



SUPERYACHT TIMES



Above and here, the 23.95-metre *Adventure*, launched in May in the Netherlands. She is the first steel hulled yacht from the yard and the first model following the Lynx Yachts collaboration. She features an exterior design from Bernd Weel.

GUY FLEURY

Was it difficult to ensure quality control so far from home in those early days?

It was a significant challenge. I was flying over to Taiwan every three weeks in the beginning. Even now, while I don't travel quite as frequently, each yacht undergoes a rigorous inspection and sea trial regime by Outer Reef staff. Quality assurance has never been an afterthought – it's embedded in everything we do.

Building a brand in the yachting world isn't easy. How did Outer Reef establish itself?

It took years, but I've always approached this as a serious business. Back in the 80s and 90s, the industry in the US had more of a party culture, but I brought a business-first mentality. I funded everything myself – no banks, no investors. I've never worked for anyone else, so failure wasn't an option. What really cemented our brand was our commitment to after-sales service. Boats – no matter how well-built – will have issues. But when you solve them quickly and support your clients unconditionally, that's what builds loyalty. Many of my team members have been with me for over 20 years. It's a close-knit group and that continuity shows.

Tell us about the merger of the Dutch builder Lynx Yachts – how did that relationship begin?

Initially, we were simply looking to expand our product offering to reduce lead times, which had reached almost three years. Lynx was an interesting prospect because they were building

a solid product but lacked in-house marketing and they relied on brokers who were more focused on commissions than brand building. Our expertise is in branding and marketing, so the synergy was obvious. I sometimes say we are a marketing company that happens to build boats. What began as a potential sales partnership evolved into something much larger. Eventually, we merged with Lynx to secure long-term stability and ensure we weren't building a brand for someone else to capitalise on later.

What has the client response been since the move to European production?

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Our American clients applauded the move, and we've seen a significant uptick in European interest

– nearly 60% of current leads are now from Europe. US Buyers have historically been more cautious about metal yachts, however the market's understanding of metal construction is quickly evolving, particularly with innovations in modern yachting coating systems.

You mentioned changing demographics. How have buyer expectations evolved?

Our average client age has shifted dramatically – from 60–65 down to around 45–50. Many younger clients are after adventure and exploration, and they're often seeking more contemporary interiors, even in classically styled hulls. Our new 54 Adventure series, for example, was designed with a younger audience in mind. We worked with Bernd Weel on the design, and remarkably, the

final version is almost identical to his first draft – he just nailed it.

You've also hinted at moving into the 40–50-metre segment. Will those builds be on spec?

No. I'm a conservative businessman. I don't build anything on spec. Everything we build has an owner involved in the project. I've seen too many businesses collapse by overextending. We've designed and engineered a 43-metre model, and now, with a capable steel shipyard in the Netherlands, we're poised to expand into that market.

And geographically – where is Outer Reef heading next?

The Pacific Rim is a key growth area. We're entering Indonesia and revisiting Australia, where we had a presence for 15 years. The Aussie dollar hasn't been favourable in recent years, but we're seeing renewed potential there. Europe remains strong, and with our new steel capabilities, we expect to grow significantly in the 24–50 metre range.

Finally, what are clients asking for now that they weren't before?


There's a real shift towards owner-operated boats and downsizing. Many are coming from 40 metre yachts and seeking something more manageable, with less reliance on crew. Design is also crucial – if you can deliver 50 metre interior volume on a 30 metre hull through smart design, you're on to something. That's where we're focusing our energy. ●



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Go West, Young Man

Once a dominant force on the global superyacht scene, American shipyards have dwindled significantly over the past decade or so. To understand how the industry is adapting, we travelled to Seattle and Vancouver – two hubs of Pacific Northwest boatbuilding with deep maritime roots. By **Justin Ratcliffe**



Delta Marine's flagship, the 72m Albatross, now 79.2m Moonstone following a major refit at Damen Yachting.

SUPERYACHT TIMES

The US has long been a cornerstone of the global superyacht market. Yet evolving buyer behaviour, international competition, shifts in economic conditions and evolving business models, have brought major challenges. The once-favourable euro-dollar exchange rate has flipped, making European yards more attractive to American buyers. Domestic builders like Trinity and Christensen have closed their doors, while others have seen production slow dramatically. This reflects a broader shift in how North American shipyards are approaching production, design and market strategy – especially in light of growing competition from countries like Turkey and Taiwan.

Recalibrating at Westport

A telling example is Westport Yachts on Washington's Pacific coast. At its peak, Westport delivered up to a dozen composite yachts annually, including more than 75 of its best-selling 112-foot series over two decades. The yard's success was underpinned by its speculative production strategy, which allowed clients to take delivery within six to twelve months. This helped the shipyard maintain a steady flow of production and consistent revenue while keeping the workforce busy. In 2003, it opened a purpose-built yard in Port Angeles to build larger yachts and launched a dozen hulls in its flagship 50-metre series. But in 2014, a change in ownership saw a shift to a build-to-order model. Production slowed substantially, and with it, the yard's competitive edge. "Looking ahead, I'm cautiously optimistic," says Westport President Daryl Wakefield. "We've returned to building on spec and currently have two yachts in our 41-metre series under construction – one of them speculative – the first since our strategic pivot. If successful, this could mark the beginning of a turnaround. But with fewer yachts in build, maintaining our workforce and infrastructure is a real balancing act."

Delta on the move

Down the road in Seattle, Delta Marine is equally adept at building in composite or steel and aluminium, evidenced over the years by yachts like *Affinity*, *Albatross*, *Gallant Lady*, *Invictus* and *Endless Summer*. The company has mostly operated under the radar, but is beginning to share more news about its activities. Traditionally focused on

custom yachts for private use with strict non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), many of its yachts have remained under the same ownership for decades. However, two composite vessels currently in build – 45-metre *Project Zembra* and 47-metre *Project Ammo* – signal a move towards expanding its presence in the charter market.

"These yachts represent a new direction for us," says Michelle Jones, Vice-President at Delta Marine. "They will be the first in Delta Marine's history to be built specifically for charter use. It's a big change for us, but one we're incredibly excited about. For the first time, we'll be able to talk openly about these yachts, show them to the public, and give potential clients the opportunity to experience the quality of a Delta yacht firsthand."

Building for charter use is aligned with Delta's long-term strategy to grow its international footprint. Both yachts will be delivered as American-flagged vessels with Cayman Islands certification, allowing them to operate in US waters under the Jones Act, which typically restricts foreign-flagged commercial yachts from visiting consecutive American ports. The move enables these yachts to charter on the West Coast of the US, an area currently underserved by yacht charters. Jones also hinted at a new collaboration with a well-known Italian designer.

"We've always marketed our yachts globally, but the core of our business will always be American," she says. "That said, collaborating with high-profile designers will help Delta appeal to a broader audience, particularly in Europe, where the design factor is extremely important."



Nordlund's 35m explorer motor yacht Cazador launched in 2018 and designed by Tim Nolan Marine and Mary Flores.

NORLUND BOAT COMPANY



A Westport Yacht's hull mould.

JUSTIN RATCLIFFE

Nordlund: reinventing refit

The Tacoma-based Nordlund Boat Company began as a builder of composite hulls for other brands, but later evolved into a boutique yard for fully custom yachts. The 115-foot expedition yachtfisher *Cazador*, launched in 2019, exemplifies its approach. The long-range cruiser launched in 2019 for a repeat client boasts a vacuum-operated elevator connecting all three deck levels – a highly unusual feature for the size of yacht.

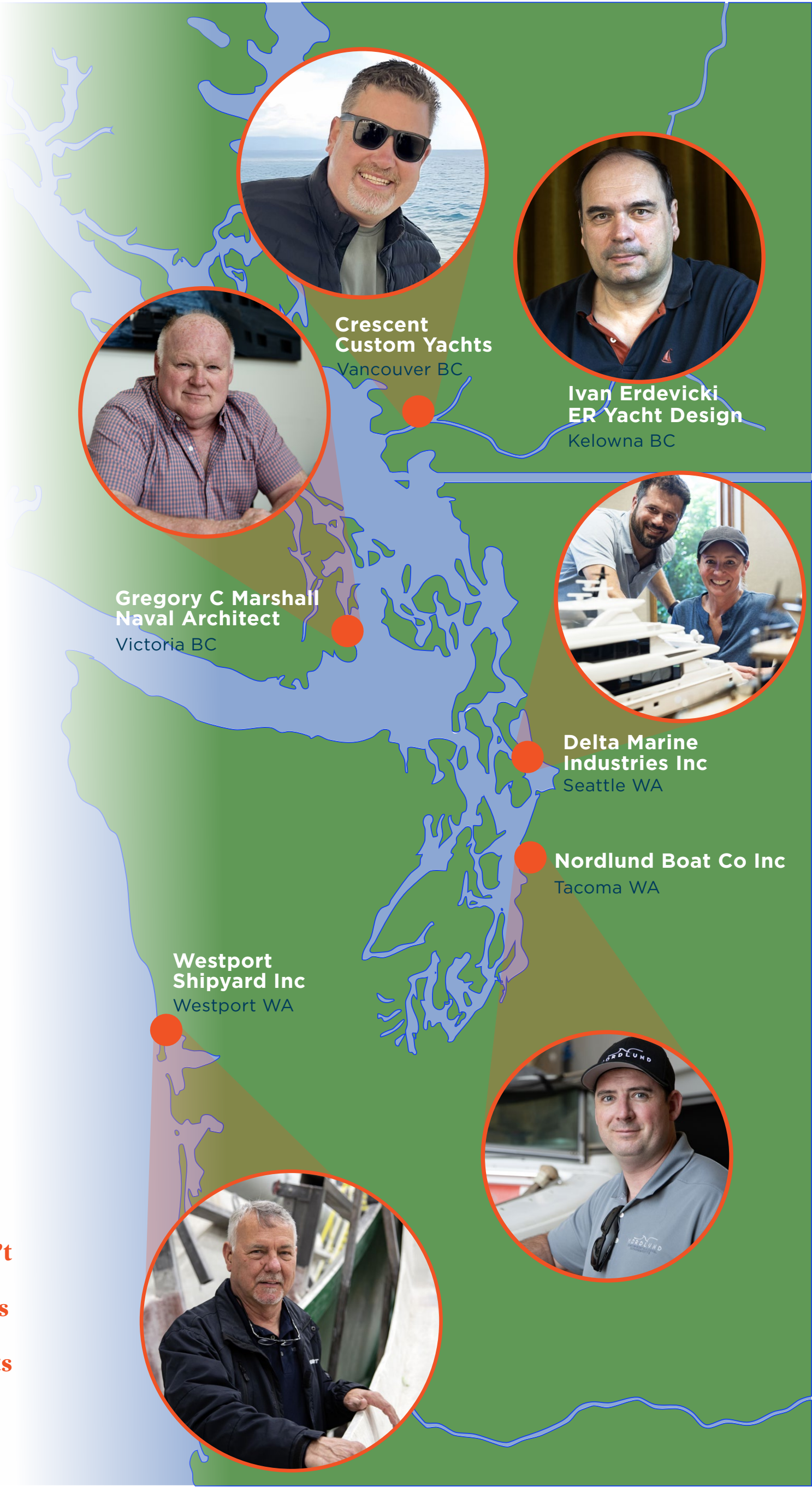
Nordlund is currently in the process of reinventing itself again, this time as a specialist refit yard. This dovetails neatly with the growing trend among owners to refurbish their existing yachts rather than build new. In fact, despite the downturn in new construction, the refit market in the US has continued at full blast with 435 refit shipyard visits noted in 2024, up almost 10% from around 400 refits a year registered during 2020 and 2021. According to The State of Yachting 2025, the US tops the list of refit countries across the size range.

“Refits require the same precision and skill as new-builds,” says Nordlund’s project manager Matthew Fowles. “Our custom experience gives us a real edge in handling complex upgrades for owners wanting to extend the life of their vessels.”

Cazador reflects how large yachts are designed, built and used in the Pacific Northwest. Purpose-driven, often with fishing in mind, their design favours practical features over extravagant luxury. Usually built in composite for rugged adventure and long voyages (American owners have fewer qualms than their European counterparts about tackling rough seas and long crossings in fibreglass boats), the focus is on efficiency, comfort and ease of maintenance. Cooler temperatures and frequent rain also mean more protected interior spaces. While in Florida it’s all about staying cool while enjoying the sunshine, in this corner of the continent yachts are more likely to have diesel heaters than AC to keep the damp out and make the shoulder seasons more tolerable when the mercury drops.

“There’s strong demand for quicker, more cost-efficient builds that don’t sacrifice quality. At the same time, today’s yachts have become overly complex, driving up costs without proportional value.”

Gregory C. Marshall



Rethinking the market

Canadian naval architect Gregory C. Marshall is active both at home and abroad with the exterior design of Nobiskrug’s *Artefact* and Dunya’s *King Benji* to his credit. He sees deeper cultural shifts affecting the sector and points to the reluctance among some North American clients to flaunt their wealth, which can discourage investment in high-profile new builds. Tax and financial concerns also prompt many to commission yachts overseas. “Builders need to rethink how they engage with the market,” Marshall explains. “There’s strong demand for quicker, more cost-efficient builds that

don’t sacrifice quality. At the same time, today’s yachts have become overly complex, driving up costs without proportional value.” Designer Ivan Erdevicki of ER Yacht Design echoes these concerns. Among various projects under way at home and abroad, he has a 65-metre explorer in-build at RMK in Istanbul that is just one of two new-builds (the other is *REV Ocean*) to meet Polar Code Category B – Ice Class PC 6 requirements. He kept a studio in downtown Vancouver, but moved out of the city during the lull that came with Covid pandemic. He believes superyacht builders in the US have lost ground through inaction.

“Many shipyards haven’t kept pace with innovation, choosing to stay conservative rather than exploring new design ideas or adopting advanced technologies,” he says. “This lack of investment and forward-thinking has led to a slowdown, with some yards struggling to keep up with their European counterparts. Success comes not only from technical expertise, but also from adapting to the shifting market.”

Crescent’s comeback

Although several shipyards in the Pacific Northwest have been mothballed or closed down, Crescent Custom Yachts is enjoying something

of a renaissance, backed in part by a resurgent commercial shipbuilding industry driven by an increase in government contracts. At the time of our visit, Crescent had four custom projects over 100 feet in build: a just-launched 36-metre yacht, two more of 45 and 42 metres – all in steel and aluminium – and a 32-metre aluminium catamaran. Crescent is also expanding its operations to include a new satellite facility south of Vancouver in White Rock (actually the site where the brand started as Crescent Beach Boatbuilders in 1988) that will grow production capacity as the company transitions from GRP to metal construction.

“We worked with composites in the past, but switching to steel and aluminum makes more sense for our clients,” says Tim Charles, Crescent’s principal and grandson of the founder. “For custom, one-off builds, metal is the better option in terms of both time and cost efficiency.”

The new facility will give Crescent the flexibility to decide whether to bring metal fabrication in-house or outsource portions to trusted partners. Additionally, it helps counteract current tariffs on steel and aluminium between the US and Canada, which have made it difficult for shipyards on both sides of the border to plan their materials procurement with confidence (the steel hull and aluminium superstructure for its 146-foot project, for example, were built across the border in neighbouring Washington). As a custom builder, Crescent follows a made-to-order business model. It has also implemented an “Open-Book-At-Cost” (OBAC) billing system that charges customers transparently for time and materials, instead of working to inflexible contracts and trying to make the best deal possible with the least amount of time and money.

“We view our relationships with clients as partnerships, not just contracts,” explains Charles. “We share the risks and rewards with them, which helps us stay busy and maintain a full order book. We don’t even use the word ‘change order’; we have scope revisions, and our clients are involved in those decisions along the way. When they see everything we do, it builds trust and strengthens the relationship.”

Navigating the future

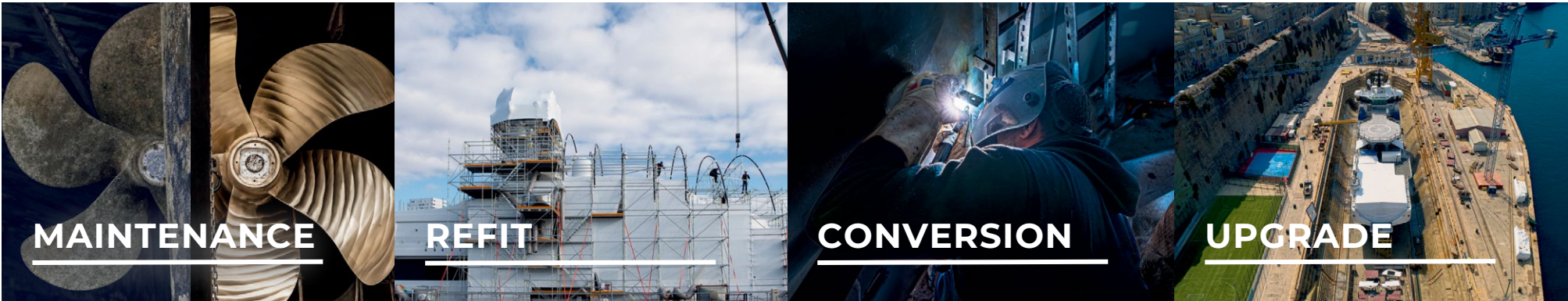
Despite ongoing pressures and uncertainties for the region’s superyacht builders, there are reasons for optimism and potential growth. The US remains the world’s largest market for superyacht ownership, which suggests there is a ready market in the offing if shipyards can adapt by streamlining production, embracing innovation and re-engaging with a new generation of owners. “The path forward is clear,” says Marshall. “To stay competitive, shipyards here need to balance customisation and luxury with the realities of modern production. By improving efficiency, reducing complexity and targeting a broader market, we can position ourselves as competitive players on the global stage.” ●



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At the Cutting Edge

Balancing tradition and transformation, **Peter Lürssen** reveals how the iconic shipyard is preparing for the next era of responsible yachting. By **Francesca Webster**.

For 150 years, Lürssen has remained under family ownership, steering the course of German yacht building from its pioneering days in 1875 to the forefront of large yacht innovation today. At the helm, Peter Lürssen continues to balance this deep-rooted legacy with the evolving demands of modern yacht construction: navigating the challenges of sustainability, technological advancement and the shifting perceptions surrounding yachting’s environmental responsibilities.

In this conversation with Francesca Webster, Peter reflects on the moments that have defined Lürssen’s place within the superyacht industry, from early milestones to the pioneering steps the shipyard is now undertaking. The discussion also underscores the critical role of collaboration and workforce development in safeguarding the future of yacht building, ensuring that Lürssen remains as relevant in the coming decades as it has been for the past century and a half.



Celebrating 150 years of family ownership, how have you managed to maintain the balance between the legacy of Lürssen and your next steps towards innovation?

You always have to reinvent yourself. We have done this many times in our history, when one window closes, you look for another that opens. But no matter what you do, you depend on your team and it is important to bring your team along and listen to them. Legacy is a great and demanding word and to live up to it, you need a constant flow of ideas – some excellent, some not so excellent – to move in the right direction.

We try to harvest input from all levels, from skilled labour on the shop floor to engineers and the commercial teams, encouraging them to contribute ideas for the future. As a family, our role is to gather and translate those ideas into producing better and more exciting products, while retaining decision-making within the family. Hopefully, those decisions are based on a clear understanding of what is necessary and what is feasible within our possibilities.

We have done many things right and a few things wrong but it is important to have a culture where people acknowledge mistakes. There is no single genius decision that sets the path, we need to keep innovating, whether that is in hybrid propulsion or filtration systems for engines. What is available on the market is not always enough. My great-grandfather built the first motorboat in 1886 and it is our challenge now to create a similar change for the future. We are working on it.

You mentioned your great-grandfather’s pioneering steps in 1886. Are there other defining moments that have shaped Lürssen’s reputation in yacht construction?

We need to differentiate between our early history and when we started working in yachting in earnest. We built motor boats, including 15 and 20 metre models in the early 1900s and 1920s, but since 1988, we took a significant step into yachting with *Coral Island*. She was an outstanding yacht with a fabulous owner, who motivated us as a shipyard, supporting our ambitions to build our first large yacht.

Limitless, the 96-metre built in 1997, which is still one of the largest US-flagged vessels, was another important milestone, allowing us to learn how to build large yachts. It is not simply about adding ten metres in length – complexity grows exponentially and *Coral Island* and *Limitless* helped us understand this.

Pelorus, launched in 2003, also made a significant impact on the yachting scene with an incredible design by Tim Heywood, which has been referenced many times by others since. *Rising Sun* was technologically a very interesting project, with its extensive use of glass, which was ahead of its time. Everyone talks about glass now, but *Rising Sun* was already there twenty years ago with her massive glass façades.

These projects, among others, illustrate a continuous construction of large yachts that has really helped us grow and refine what we can offer.



Above: Peter Lürssen, left, his great grandfather Friedrich Lürssen. Here: the 115m *Pelorus*, launched in 2003 with exterior design from Tim Heywood and interiors from Terence Disdale Design.



The 138.6-metre *Rising Sun*, featuring exterior design from Jon Bannenberg and interiors from Seccombe Design. Her exterior, with its expansive use of glass, helped to define the next generation of superyachts and, according to Peter, is one of the yard’s most impactful builds to date.



The 72.54-metre *Coral Island*, now *Coral Ocean*, was launched in 1994 and is widely seen as the first true superyacht and put the yard on the map in terms of large yacht construction. Designed throughout by Jon Bannenberg, she remains one of the industry's most influential projects and recently underwent a major rebuild leaving her in excellent condition.

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You have referenced hybrid propulsion, alternative fuels and the need for cleaner yachts. What role do you see these technologies playing in the future of large yacht construction at Lürssen?

One of the biggest challenges in yachting is aligning with climate goals and reducing CO2 emissions, making the development of more efficient and 'greener' yachts essential for the wider acceptance of yachting. We are researching and investing heavily in this process, as is every major shipyard, although there is not yet a clear single path forward.

We believe methanol holds a lot of potential regarding usability and energy density and we have the advantage of working with a very supportive client who has allowed us to install a methanol fuel cell on a project. However, as with all research and development at the forefront of innovation, achieving full reliability while pioneering new technologies is challenging. These processes take time and recalibration, but I am optimistic we will get there and methanol will become a very promising option for the future.

Are other owners also interested in exploring methanol fuel cell technology, or is this a one-off case?

The client who stepped forward to support us on this path was certainly unique at the time, but we are now seeing other competent, inquisitive owners expressing interest in these kinds of energy-producing capabilities. Many owners understand that a significant portion of a yacht's emissions come not from propulsion but from creating power for the hotel load, such as air conditioning, lighting and other onboard systems.

There is a growing interest in cleaner energy production and in reducing the energy required to operate a yacht. For example, owners are now questioning whether air conditioning needs to maintain 20-21 degrees inside at midday when everyone is in swimming trunks, or whether it is more sensible to target cooler temperatures at night. By adjusting these parameters and educating owners on the impact, we can substantially reduce energy requirements.

Additionally, through power management systems, a practice we have long used on navy ships, we can stagger large consumers to reduce absolute heat load. It is a holistic approach and it is encouraging to see clients proactively engaging with these discussions, recognising that efficiency extends beyond flashy new propulsion systems.

How is Lürssen working to develop the next generation of yacht builders to ensure skills are retained and advanced within the industry?

Workforce development is a challenge across many European industries. In Germany, we have a vocational training system that involves three years of basic training to become a skilled worker and we have always prioritised training apprentices within our group. Ships are built on the shop floor, not in offices, so this in-house training for skilled labour is crucial.



LÜRSSEN

Beyond this, we collaborate with universities to attract young engineers across electrical, mechanical and naval architecture disciplines, offering internships and the opportunity to write their master's or bachelor's theses with us, helping to foster an interest in shipbuilding.

In addition, we have recently launched the Lürssen Foundation, initially in Croatia and now expanding into Germany, to support promising young engineers by allowing them to work on projects that may not have immediate relevance but which could have significant long-term potential. We currently have six students in the programme, all of whom show excellent promise. If all continue to demonstrate the dedication and discipline we have seen so far, it will be a strong pipeline for our future.

What do you consider to be the biggest challenge facing yachting today and how is Lürssen preparing to address it?

Yachting has faced criticism and it is important for us to demonstrate that we are making a genuine effort to reduce our carbon footprint. If we can show that what we do is relevant to the broader marine industry, it will help support the future of yachting. At the same time, this is personal for me – if we do not have a healthy ocean, why be on a yacht at all?

Many of us have witnessed the degradation of the marine environment, whether it is oil spills or plastic waste on beaches. It is the responsibility of everyone in the maritime sector to protect and restore the oceans where we can. This has not always been a universal focus, but we are seeing increasing support, with events such as the recent UN Ocean Conference in France. It is vital that we continue to take responsibility for preserving marine environments.

How important is collaboration within the industry to achieve these goals?

Collaboration is absolutely key. We share the goal of reducing environmental impact through initiatives like the Water Revolution Foundation, where many major shipyards and designers work together towards this shared objective. The challenges facing the industry are too large for any single shipyard or designer to tackle alone.

It is encouraging that platforms now exist to focus on the ocean within the broader context of climate change. Collaboration will be essential in developing the technologies needed to bring yachting to the next required level and in protecting the ocean for future generations.

Finally, looking ahead as Lürssen celebrates its 150th anniversary, what are your hopes for the future?

I hope that, as a yachting industry, we find a good answer to meet the climate goals by 2050 and that we reach the goal of having thirty percent of the marine environment protected by 2030. On a personal level, it would be fantastic to continue the legacy of my great-grandfather, who built the first motorboat, by building the first yacht without a combustion engine, marking the next milestone in maritime innovation.

Of course, today, the scale and complexity are vastly different and it requires many people across the shop floor, engineering offices and commercial teams to work together over several years. Fortunately, our clients understand this complexity and support the process, for which I am grateful. We will continue to invest in research and development and, while nothing is guaranteed, we will keep trying. 🌊



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Making Moves

With a bold expansion strategy and fresh backing from Blackstone, Safe Harbor is reshaping the global marina landscape, **Francesca Webster** finds out more.



Over the past decade, Safe Harbor Marinas has undergone one of the most significant transformations in the modern marine industry. From a modest network of just 13 locations, the company has grown to become the world's largest owner and operator of marinas, now comprising 139 sites across the United States. At the helm of this extraordinary growth journey is CEO Baxter Underwood, who has led the brand through a period of bold expansion, strategic alignment and an evolving service ethos focused on excellence, scale and stewardship.

Earlier this year, Safe Harbor entered a new chapter following its recapitalisation by Blackstone Infrastructure Partners, a move that reinforces its ambitions to not only strengthen its existing portfolio, but to position itself more prominently within the global superyacht and marina sectors.

In this exclusive conversation with SuperYacht Times, Baxter Underwood speaks with Francesca Webster about the core principles driving Safe Harbor's growth, its international outlook and the importance of long-term investment in both community and customer experience.

What core principles have guided this rapid expansion and how have they shaped your vision for serving the global boating community?

One core principle that has shaped our growth is partnership. Our work began with a realisation that everyone can win if we work together. A lot of businesses see the world as a battle for limited resources. Sometimes this is true, but this perspective can also be a handicap. We operate in an asset class that can support exponential growth for everyone involved.

The fundamental product in boating is experience. By working together – in our case building a network to serve boaters wherever they may want to be – we can bring more people into boating by enhancing their experience. This principle has shaped how we think about transactions. Our fundamental posture is one of partnership. We are good at sharing responsibility and economics because that is one way we can unlock the most value for boaters and the industry.

Another core principle is delivering exceptional service and positive memories for the global boating community. We do not let our rapid expansion come at the expense of exceptional customer experience. So, even as we add new locations, our team is also finding ways to improve existing locations.

A third would be our focus on environmental stewardship. We believe the pie can grow as a whole – for everyone – only if we vigilantly attend to our delicate silent stakeholder (the environment) along the way.

How does the new access to capital directly support Safe Harbor's long-term ambition within the superyacht and marina sectors?

Our growth has always required access to capital. Whether we are investing to replace ageing infrastructure or to enhance the offerings at our existing locations, we know that a strong and vision-aligned capital partner is critical.

Our customers want a frictionless and memorable experience, and we are excited to be able to accelerate the investments into our facilities around the globe.

But capital has to be on the same page. We are very fortunate to now have Blackstone Infrastructure as our partner. They share a keen focus on the importance of establishing and maintaining good relationships with the communities which we serve, which is important in the marina's business. Importantly, Blackstone is a long-term investor who has the ability to provide us with scale capital.

Their business model is focused on finding strong platforms that they can support and invest behind for years to come. This means that not only will we be able to grow and expand into new locations and geographies, but their resources will enable us to improve and add to existing locations where needed. They are as eager as we are to make long-term investments into the communities and customers we serve together.

With Safe Harbor increasingly serving the superyacht segment, what specific investments or operational adjustments are being made to better accommodate large yachts, their captains and crew across your marinas?

- We are investing in:
- (i) more locations to serve them, regardless of their travel calendar for the year
 - (ii) physical infrastructure at those locations – both for the vessels and also the crews
 - (iii) the team of talented technicians and engineers who service our superyacht customers
 - (iv) deep relationships with the builders, manufacturers and the highest quality third-party service providers

Following your discussions with Monaco Marine, how does Safe Harbor assess potential international partnerships and what role do you see these collaborations playing in your next phase of growth?

We think of Monaco Marine as an elegant platform for growth. The team is known for delivering high-quality service to boaters. It has an unmatched network of assets throughout the south of France. Their people, their places and their culture are closely aligned with our own. It is with such groups that we have grown soundly in the United States, and these types of partnerships – whether in the U.S. or the Mediterranean – will continue to be part of our growth story.

What measures are you prioritising to ensure consistent service standards and customer experience across your growing portfolio of marinas?

We are a customer-first business. Our licence to operate depends on our continued commitment to excellence. We measure our progress through formulaic queries like scheduled and at-the-business surveys, internal and external operational and control audits, and secret shopping at the properties. ●



SAFE HARBOR MARINAS



As this newspaper went to print, Safe Harbor had just announced the acquisition of Monaco Marine pictured here, marking a major development for the company.

SAFE HARBOR MARINAS



MOTOR YACHT 66MT



THE ITALIAN SEA GROUP



admiral-yachts.com

How Bad Is It Really?



Is the market really slowing down? And how are different segments fairing? **Ralph Dazert** takes a look at current market trends.

As the superyacht brokerage market moves through the third quarter of 2025, our Head of Intelligence, Ralph Dazert, takes a closer look at the much-talked-about downturn of the market, focusing on the new-build segment while also taking a quick snapshot of the used yacht market.

New-build sales: still behind but catching up

The new-build market started 2025 in a pretty jittery mood with uncertainty about the US market and the Trump Administration's policy of import tariffs, coupled with a downward trend in the European market worrying brokers and shipyards alike. The market for GRP yachts built to a model (dominant up to about 45 metres) has definitely taken some hits, with some well-known manufacturers like Sunseeker and Princess in particular announcing staff reductions. Meanwhile, as of early August 2025, the share prices of the Italian builders Sanlorenzo and The Italian Sea Group had also taken hits over the past twelve months (-15% and -35% respectively year-on-year since early August 2024), as did the shares of Alexander Marine, the mother company of the Taiwanese builder Ocean Alexander (-30%), while the US yachting giant MarineMax (a large player in the sales of GRP-hulled boats and yachts up to 40 metres, among other activities) saw its share price decline by -22% since early August 2024. We noticed that the major builders of GRP yachts generally have more speculation new-builds and dealer stock boats available than they had a year ago, meaning they have capital stuck in those boats for longer periods of time.

All that makes for pretty grim reading, but what do the numbers look like? They are definitely behind on the same period in 2024, about 10 % down, from 111 sales for the year up to 31 July 2024, to 100 for the year up to 31 July 2025. But, those are just high-level numbers, so let's take a closer look:

New superyacht sales are following two divergent paths: sales of yachts up to 50 metres are down by 12% in numbers of yachts sold, while sales over 50 metres are stable. Interestingly, the decline between 30 and 40 metres can be attributed entirely to sailing yachts, which are down by six units year-on-year after experiencing something of a boom in 2024, as explained in our market column in SuperYacht Times issue 53. With attractive build slots for new sailing yachts currently in short supply, that segment seems to have slowed down again. Even though sales numbers for motor yachts in the 30-40-metre segment appear to be stable, something has definitely changed in that market, as the share of stock sales (yachts completed on speculation and sold afterwards) has almost doubled compared to a year ago, from seven to 12 sales. So clearly, new yachts in this segment are taking longer to sell than before. Also, sales of projects started for the client have almost halved compared to 2024, from 32 to 18 sales, with sales of projects started on speculation having gone slightly up, from 12 to 16.

The decline between 40 and 50 metres is mainly caused by lower sales of yachts up to 45 metres, which dropped by five units, while the number of sales above 45 metres (which are mainly steel-hulled yachts) has dropped by just one unit compared to the

same period of 2024.

Sales between 50 and 60 metres have held steady while sales between 60 and 80 metres were up by one unit, as market activity in the larger segments is buzzing and appears to be largely unaffected by global economic and political turmoil. However, there is an important side note to be made here: we are hearing from several shipyards all over Europe that clients are taking longer and longer to sign on the dotted line and are actively playing out shipyards against each other more than before. Reportedly, clients at the top end of the market are baulking at Northern European price levels, while they have the perception that the new-build market has weakened in their favour, so they are playing it hard. Meanwhile, yards in the top segment have little room to maneuver on the price. The order backlogs at the different players on the top end also vary, from fully booked to yards that could do with something extra and are prepared to fight on price. At the moment, sales of newbuilds over 80 metres are still behind by one project, but the rather significant amount of large new-build projects under negotiation that we are tracking suggests that this new-build segment might notch up quite a few extra sales before the end of the year, making it a better year than 2024, which in itself was already a big improvement on 2023.

So what about used yachts?

The used yacht market warrants its own extensive study because of its sheer size and importance for the brokerage market overall, but for lack of space we will leave you with a short summary for the moment: the market for used yachts over 30 metres appears to be stable compared to 2024 in terms of numbers of yachts sold, with 200 used yachts sold as of 31 July 2025, compared to 199 for the same period of the preceding year. Total Gross Tonnage (GT) sold though is actually up by 8% to 93,500 GT, indicating that the average used yacht sold during 2025 so far is bigger than in 2024. The total value of yachts sold so far in 2025 is a bit hard to estimate as we already counted no less than 17 off market deals so far in 2025 (including some very large yachts), but it is well over 3 billion euros, which is not dissimilar to our estimate for the same period for 2024. On paper that is not all bad, but we are only in early August at the time of writing. As a final note, sales of used yachts appear to be following a slightly different pattern compared to those of new yachts, with the number of yachts sold between 30 and 40 metres down up compared to last year, while sales between 40 and 50 metres slid after two positive years in 2023 and 2024. Sales over 50 metres meanwhile are up, entirely due to a strong increase between 50 and 60 metres.

Conclusion

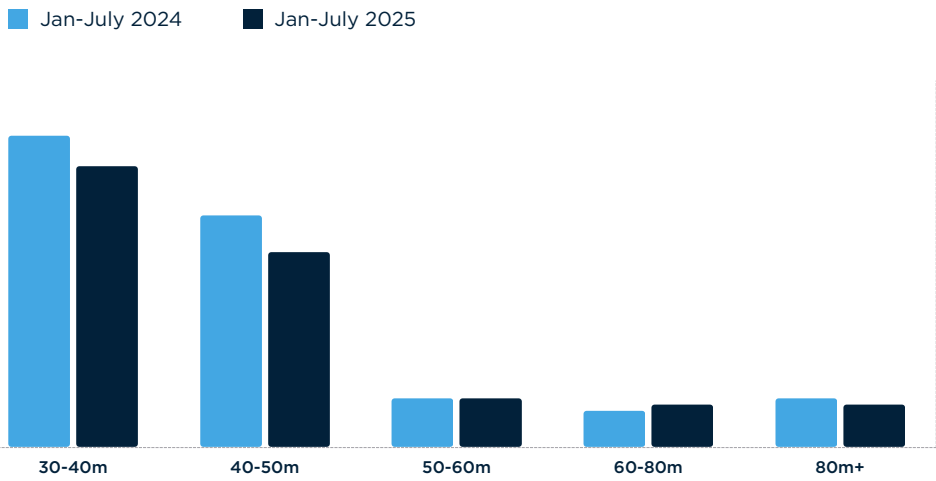
While the new-build market up to about 45 metres is very challenging at the moment, the larger segment is trending up, while the used yacht market seems to be holding steady and exhibits similar divergent paths in sales numbers to the new yacht market, with total sales up to 50 metres down versus last year, while sales of the larger superyachts over 50 metres are up. We are very curious how the rest of the year will play out for the market, with the important third quarter with its key yacht shows coming up.🔴



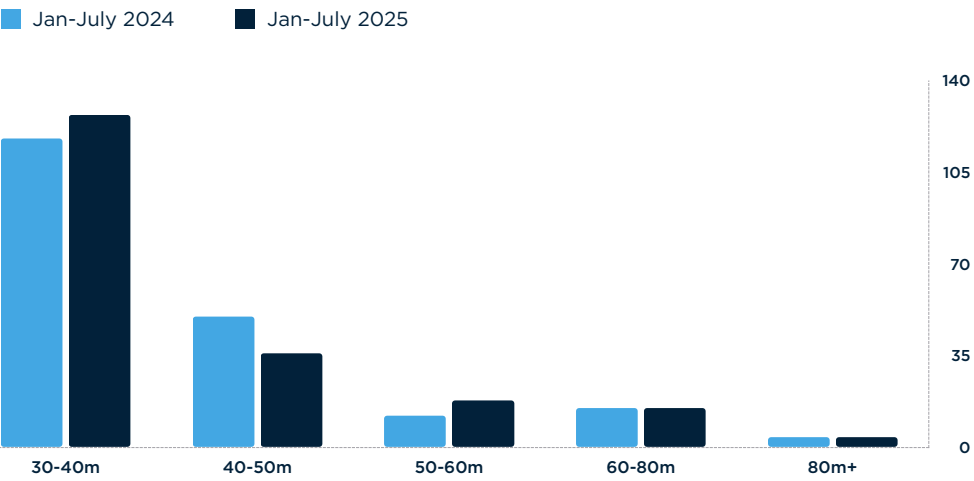
The 84m Feadship superyacht Savannah sold in May with a last known asking price of €140,000,000 - one of the largest deals so far this year.

LÉANDRE LOYSEAU

New yacht sales 30m+ Jan-July 2024 vs Jan-July 2025
By length segment



Used yacht sales 30m+ Jan-July 2024 vs Jan-July 2025
By length segment





LÜRSSEN
ENDLESS HORIZONS



CHANGE YOUR POINT OF VIEW

State of Play

David Westwood, Managing Director of TWW Yachts, on the shifting superyacht market and bucking the market slowdown.

David Westwood, Managing Director of TWW Yachts, shares an insight into the realities behind the superyacht market’s much-discussed slowdown, how TWW is bucking the trend with a strategic digital focus and what to expect in the coming charter and show seasons.

There’s been plenty of talk about a slowdown in the superyacht sector. How does that compare with what you’re seeing on the ground?

I had real concerns at the end of 2024 that the momentum post-pandemic couldn’t possibly continue. The industry was running hot; sales in brokerage and new-build were high, shipyards were under immense pressure due to full order books and delivery slots and we faced shortages across the board for good product, along with operational constraints, especially in the crewing sector, especially in crewing. A slowdown wasn’t just inevitable, in some ways it was needed.

There was global uncertainty too: the US election, the Ukraine war and, more recently, instability in the Middle East. Typically, in an American election year, clients pause on speculation and sit tight. But interestingly, after the election result, we saw a steep uptake from December through February in both brokerage and charter. The US, which historically makes up over half of most firms’ sales, came back strongly.

And has that recovery held into 2025?

Not entirely. From March onwards, instability globally – tariffs, wars, shifting policies in Asia and the Far East has caused the momentum to dip again. The Middle East, which is a key charter market for us, softened slightly, and Asia was hesitant too, particularly in areas like Hong Kong and Singapore.

What’s been fascinating for us at TWW is that, while others are still talking about a slowdown, our figures are encouraging and have generally risen. We’ve seen a distinct rise in lead generation and, more importantly, a marked increase in conversions – particularly from our historical client database. Clients who’d previously stayed on the fence for two or three years are now engaging with intent. There’s also been real momentum in newer regions, with active conversations and transactions in markets such as Turkey, Uzbekistan, Mexico and Australia. We’ve seen a notable uplift in activity from those emerging territories, and a broader appetite for charter and brokerage alike.

Why do you think that is?

I put it down to our digital-first approach. We made a conscious decision in the early 2020s to break from traditional formats and go all in on digital. We invested heavily in SEO and a large in-house marketing department, which has created a dynamic content strategy, delivered quickly. While others competed in the same space in the same way, we aimed to stand apart.

Ultimately, while the market might be flattening in some segments, the demand is still there, it’s just a case of reaching clients the right way, with the right product, at the right moment.

Which segment of the market do you think has been hit hardest?

Although this isn’t my main area of expertise, it appears that the production segment has been hit fairly hard. A lot of shipyards pushed ahead post-COVID, expecting the momentum to continue, but sales didn’t match that optimism. There’s been a build-up of stock, especially in the US and dealers have struggled to shift it. It’s a riskier environment. However, we’re now seeing those inventories softening and the stock beginning to move, particularly with the US market picking back up.

There’s also been a slight ‘factory reset’ on pricing and discounting, which more realistically reflects the reality of the market. And while we still operate in the production market, we’ve tightened our criteria. TWW’s sweet spot is really the 35 to 75-metre segment, where we continue to thrive.



TWW YACHTS

You also mentioned the charter market – how is 2025 shaping up?

Strong overall. We had a significant wave of bookings between December and February and then another surge from May onwards. That cycle is fairly typical with spring holidays diverting attention, but overall, we’ve written a lot of charters this year and are happy with the results to date.

Interestingly, it’s the newer boats that are being booked early. Yachts over five to ten years old are proving more difficult to fill in our core range, while the larger yachts, 75 metres and up, are facing leaner calendars than usual. That market has been slower to recover.

That said, crew is everything. We have older yachts in our fleet with over 11 weeks of charter booked because of phenomenal crews. Repeat business plays a huge role, and loyalty to captains and heads of departments outweigh age in some cases.

As we look ahead to the autumn show season, how are things shaping up?

The shows are full – both Cannes and Monaco. I love Cannes: it’s interactive, relaxed and productive – a great place to showcase product. We’re bringing three yachts this year: the 55-metre Heesen *After You*, the 37-metre Tansu *Preference 19* and *M Forever* the 33-metre Custom Line.

Monaco is busier and more intense, but also hugely exciting. We’re particularly proud to be bringing the brand new and recently delivered *After You*, a 60-metre explorer from Damen and her support vessel *Emotional*. They’re not for sale, but they’re going on a global voyage starting in Norway and heading through Greenland and the Northwest Passage and both are available for charter, the Heesen *After You* and *Emerald*, the 51-metre Feadship will also be available for inspection. 🌟



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Onboard *Acqua Chiara*

Enrico Chhibber takes a look at the interior design of Columbus’ latest delivery, the 47m *Acqua Chiara*, with insights from her owner and design team.

The 47-metre Columbus superyacht *Acqua Chiara* was delivered in 2025 to Italian entrepreneur Danilo Iervolino. She combines elegant exterior styling by Hot Lab with naval architecture by Columbus Yachts. Originally based on a 43-metre platform, the design was lengthened under Iervolino’s direction to achieve better balance and more refined proportions. Giuseppe Palumbo, Sole Director of Palumbo Superyachts, characterises *Acqua Chiara* as an exclusive and highly customised yacht shaped around a deeply involved client. “This innovative line was born from my own vision, which Hot Lab was able to bring to life. The superyacht combines a distinctive exterior design characterised by sharp yet fluid lines that widen at midship and taper again towards the stern and bow. It’s undeniably an innovative design that prioritises onboard liveability and a constant connection with the sea.” Reflecting on the longstanding collaboration behind the project, Antonio Romano, Co-founder and Business

Director at Hot Lab, comments: “Our partnership with Columbus Yachts has been a journey of innovation and excellence, from the first Columbus Sport Hybrid 40m in 2016 to many more prestigious projects such as *Anvilugi*, *Frette* and *Night Fury II*. Long-standing collaborations like ours prove that when expertise and passion unite, the results are truly extraordinary. We look forward to many more successful projects ahead.” For Hot Lab, the project also represents a significant evolution of its design language. Enrico Lumini, Co-founder and Design Director, describes *Acqua Chiara*, the third yacht in the Atlantic line developed with Columbus Yachts, a brand of Palumbo Superyachts, as the first to mark a genuine technical and stylistic shift. “It perfectly embodies Hot Lab’s philosophy of ‘incremental innovation’, which we have pursued for several years. This means constantly improving small elements of each project to optimise both the yacht’s construction and the experience on board,” he explains.



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



Interior design: A balance of classic warmth and contemporary detail

Acqua Chiara's interiors are defined by a timeless style enriched with contemporary touches, including the use of Vetrite panels, Sicis mosaic and dark metal-effect finishes. The main saloon is furnished with large custom sofas in white sponge fabric with blue edging, creating a calm, inviting atmosphere reminiscent of an island retreat. Two Fendi Totu armchairs and a teak coffee table complete the arrangement, while white parquet floors combine with natural oak ceilings, partly lacquered in matt white, to create a bright, airy feel. On both the starboard and port sides, lacquered wood wall coverings with a subtle metal effect frame the expansive floor-to-ceiling windows. Towards the stern, a large Stopsol glass panel integrates a 75-inch television seamlessly into the space. The professional galley is situated on the port side, while crossing the lobby leads to the owner's suite, which features a generous wardrobe, two Fendi Totu armchairs, and a bathroom with both a tub and a shower. Glass walls in Galaxy blue shades, combined with dark brown leather accents on the bed frame and bedside tables, add depth to the space. Burnished metal finishings complement wall lamps and a table lamp by Bonaldo's Sofi collection, crafted in blown glass and burnished brass, lending a refined touch to the suite. The bathroom combines white marble with shower and wall coverings in silver mosaic, arranged in a geometric design by Galena Sicis, and includes a shower with a hammam system.

Behind the staircase, which is designed in burnished metal with dark brown treads and a hammered brown leather handrail, a Vetrite wall in varying shades creates an eye-catching backdrop. Cantalupi lamps, tubular in borosilicate glass twisted with black and white metal, add an elegant final detail.

Acqua Chiara accommodates up to ten guests across five staterooms, supported by a dedicated crew of nine providing round-the-clock service. On the lower deck forward, the layout includes two staterooms with king-size beds and two with twin beds, each featuring a private marble bathroom finished with Sicis geometric mosaic. To soften the darker tones of the leather bed frames and Vetrite details, a white floor carpet has been selected throughout the sleeping area, creating a lighter, more inviting atmosphere. Decorative appliques by Bonbori-Brokis recall the traditional paper lamps found in Japanese temples, while the bedside lamps in the double cabins are from Oluce's Superluna line in gold and black metal. All doors in the sleeping quarters are finished in charcoal-grey metal and glass, interlaid with Aquafil metallic fabric by Syntarqui, which contributes to the contemporary yet understated feel.

"*Acqua Chiara* is undoubtedly an expression of this philosophy and of the close relationship we had with the owner, who guided many of the stylistic choices on board. The result is a yacht that feels fresh, rich in contrasting colours and highly personal in its materials, quite different from the earlier Atlantique yachts," notes Lumini.



FRASER



FRASER

Length:
47-metres

Builder:
Columbus Yachts

Volume: 496 GT

Ext. and Int. Designer:
Hot Lab

Nav. Arch.:
Colombus Yachts



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



GIOVANNI MALGARINI

GIOVANNI MALGARINI | FRASER

Exterior spaces: Versatile areas for relaxation and entertainment

Reflecting on the outdoor areas, Iervolino says: “I had long considered building a yacht that combined aesthetic refinement with functional efficiency, reflecting my interest in the sea and in how onboard spaces are designed and experienced.”

As with the entire Atlantique range, the stern lines are a defining feature of this superyacht, which draws its identity from a sailing-inspired design philosophy. Externally, the aft spaces are arranged across three closely connected levels. Moving from bow to stern, there is a covered dining area, a central lounge with a scenic pool and fold-out balconies, and finally a platform with transformer positioned just 50 centimetres above the waterline.

The forward section of the upper deck features a scenic swimming pool surrounded by sun loungers, a sofa and side tables. Towards the stern, a spacious lounge area is furnished with sofas and armchairs, along with an eight-seater teak table from the Talenti line that can be easily converted into

an open-air cinema space. Also on this deck, a second formal dining table in teak and marble, paired with Minotti chairs, comfortably seats up to twelve guests. The chandelier above is from the Linea collection by Viabizzuno.

Opening the floor-to-ceiling windows on both sides, together with the glass doors aft, creates an unparalleled sense of being on a terrace suspended above the sea. The bow wall is decorated with a striking custom mosaic installation by Sisis in shades of blue, light blue, black and white. Forward on the port side, there is a pantry and a dayhead, while the lobby leads to the bridge, adjacent to the captain’s cabin.

The sundeck centres around a generous relaxation area with sofas and armchairs. A console at the stern and a large sunpad with a bar at the bow complete this versatile space, offering guests multiple options for enjoying life outdoors.

At this size, the yacht reaches the 500 GT limit, and its proportions are more slender than the previous models, which are four metres shorter. “This fully expresses the design of the line, which is very soft, elegant and modern,” explains Lumini.



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



GIOVANNI MALGARINI



GIOVANNI MALGARINI | FRASER



GIOVANNI MALGARINI | FRASER

A dedicated vision for charter hospitality

Reflecting on the project’s purpose, Iervolino explains that *Acqua Chiara* was conceived entirely for charter, with the aim of developing a professional venture in luxury hospitality at sea. “I wanted to engage with the sector by offering a charter experience that prioritises both design and service at the highest level,” he says.

The yacht, which is managed by Fraser Yachts, already has several bookings and will remain in the Mediterranean this season, primarily cruising between the Côte d’Azur, the Costa Smeralda and the Amalfi Coast. Iervolino adds that few yachts in this segment offered the same combination of aesthetic refinement and attention to detail that he sought to achieve.

“Great care has been taken with every aspect of the experience, from Hermès tableware and Loro Piana cashmere throws to a curated wine selection, scented candles and high-end bath products. The intention was to deliver a consistently elevated charter experience across all touchpoints onboard.”

Although he plans to spend a few days on board as a guest, Iervolino is clear that *Acqua Chiara* is not for private use. “The project was never intended for my own use but rather for delivering a genuinely refined charter experience,” he concludes. 🌊

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BLUEGAME

News in Brief

RECENT DELIVERIES

ADA Yacht Works' 50m Legasea

Built by the Turkish ADA Yacht Works, *Legasea* is 50-metres of pure luxury and enjoyment. Her rear hosts a beach club, plunge pool and a cosy sunbathing spot, complimenting the open-plan interior where tall windows flood the spacious saloon with natural light. With exterior design by Uldas Yacht Design, interior design by Luca Dini Design & Architecture, naval architecture by Ginton Naval Architects, and engineering done by Norse Design, *Legasea* is designed for ocean living. All aspects of her design were managed by Homeport Yacht Management.



ETKIN GÜREL

Feadship 101m superyacht Moonrise delivered

Evolutions take time and *Moonrise* is no exception. After four years of re-construction, this 101-metre steel-hull is the upgraded version of the 95-metre *Moonrise*. The newest design of *Moonrise* features interior design by Rémi Tessier and both naval architecture and exterior design by De Voogt Naval Architects. *Moonrise* features a tall mast, yet the domes typically found on superyachts are absent - a first for Feadship. Another special feature is her noise level: the propellers and appendages reduce not only the noise underwater, but also the interior sound levels.



RUBEN GRIFFIOEN

Delivery of the 78m custom-built Amalya yacht

Amalya Yacht, also known by her build name, *Blue Marlin*, has been delivered to her owners. A custom-built design, the Italian builder, Admiral, launched *Amalya* Yacht in January of this year. Both her interior and exterior are designed by Dutch studio Sinot Yacht Architecture & Design, with naval architecture penned in-house by Admiral. Her skyblue hull hosts six staterooms and supports a spacious deck, equipped with a six-metre swimming pool, jacuzzi and a dedicated lounging area.



LORENZO TAMPUCCI

Golden Yachts delivers 60m superyacht O'Madeleine

After a secretive construction and launch, *O'Madeleine* now navigates her way through Greek waters. *O'Madeleine* features an all-Italian design: exterior architecture, guest suites and the bridge are designed by Studio Vafiadis, while her interior areas are designed by Massari Design. She features soft curves and rounded edges that are inspired by the sea's gentle rhythms that will be debuted at this year's Monaco Yacht Show.



STUDIO RESKOS

RECENT LAUNCHES

Tankoa Yachts announces the launch of Singolare, the 45-metre superyacht

The second hull of the T450 series, *Singolare* was launched at the Tankoa's private dock in Genoa, Italy. Her exterior design is by Cassetta Yacht Designers, while her naval architecture is penned in-house by Tankao Yachts. *Singolare's* interior design is cared for by Brazilian architect Debora Aguiar, and conveys a warm, elegant and contemporary atmosphere. Upon delivery, *Singolare's* twin MAN engines will jet her through the Mediterranean before heading across the Atlantic to cruise the Caribbean.



TANKOA



FERRETTI GROUP

First hull of the 40MXP series, Miouch, launched

Numarine has announced the launch of *Miouch*, the first hull in the 40-metre 40-Mediterranean Explorer (MXP) superyacht series. The exterior and interior of *Miouch* are designed by Can Yalman, while Umberto Tagliavini penned the naval architecture. This Mediterranean Explorer can accommodate up to 12 guests in six staterooms and features a spacious alfresco dining setup, a bar and a lounge area surrounding the pool. While the 40MXP series preserves the stylistic DNA of Numarine's models, her new design features enhance the intimate connection with the sea that a yacht provides.



KEREM SANLIMAN

Launching the first Riva 112 Dolcevita Super

From their shipyard in La Spezia, Italy, Riva has announced the launch of the first hull of the 34-metre Riva 112 Dolcevita Super. The yacht's design was headed by Officina Italiana Design (Mauro Micheli), who created both the interior and exterior look. Instead her naval architecture was penned in-house by Riva, who describes her look as an "evolution of the 110" Dolcevita" and provides a more immersive experience with the ocean. The Riva 112 Dolcevita Super series is designed with a lot of space and light, and has flexibility in her design to allow for client-customisation.

Our Favourite Instagram Posts



FERRETTI

Ferretti Yachts launches the first Ferretti 800

The first 24-metre Ferretti 800 has been launched at the Cattolica shipyard in Italy. The Ferretti 800/01 completes the brand's flybridge range renewal programme that began back in 2018. Her exterior design is by architect Filippo Salvetti, while her interiors were designed by ideae!TALIA. Designed with a focus for comfort and privacy, Ferretti 800 also uses her space efficiently. Onboard you'll find a beach area, a slide-out television, and large windows to maximise natural light. 🌊



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Breaking the Mould

Sanlorenzo's first SD132 *Andiamo* redefines spatial luxury through asymmetric innovation, **Francesca Webster** finds out more.



GUILLAUME PLISSON

Sanlorenzo's latest SD132 model, the *Andiamo*, represents a striking evolution in semi-displacement yacht design, one that artfully balances aesthetic elegance with intelligent spatial engineering. The result is a vessel that pushes the boundaries of interior volume and liveability, reflecting the shipyard's relentless commitment to innovation and design sophistication.

A new standard in spatial configuration

At 420 GT, *Andiamo* is exceptional among yachts of its size, a distinction achieved through Sanlorenzo's signature approach to space optimisation. From the 85-square-metre fly deck to the transformative beach club, *Andiamo* boasts volumes rarely seen in this category. The layout, designed in close collaboration with Zuccon International Project, not only enhances onboard circulation but crafts an uninterrupted connection with the sea.

Key to this sense of openness is the innovative beach area, which seamlessly connects to the aft cockpit. When the lateral terraces are deployed, they unveil a 70-square-metre expanse – a walkable seafront terrace that blurs the boundary between yacht and ocean. “Here, the lateral terraces, once rotated and opened, offer guests large walkable surfaces of 70 square-meters,” notes the shipyard, “transforming it into an open terrace that allows guests to fully connect with the sea.”

In contrast to conventional layouts, *Andiamo* utilises an asymmetric deck design. The main deck walkway is offset to the port side, while the upper deck walkway is positioned starboard – a signature move that has become synonymous with Sanlorenzo's most progressive models. This configuration, explains the yard, “optimises the volumes, seamlessly connecting the decks and facilitating vertical circulation.”

Sensory design

The interiors of *Andiamo* are no less compelling than her superstructure. Earthy tones, tactile materials and curated textures define a palette that fosters intimacy and authenticity, a conscious design philosophy driven by Zuccon International Project, who also curated the exterior layout.

“The interiors reflect the stylistic journey undertaken by the Studio,” explains Bernardo Zuccon, “aimed at enhancing a sense of naturalness and establishing a sensory connection between the owner and the yacht.” This guiding principle informs every design decision aboard *Andiamo*, from the soft, stone-like cement finishes to the carefully balanced interplay of light and dark woods.

Zuccon continues: “A material moodboard and earth-inspired colours create authentic, balanced and welcoming environments.” This emphasis on materiality not only offers a refined aesthetic but also aligns with a wider sustainability focus. The fabrics and furnishings have been selected with an environmental consciousness, while still providing the warmth and textural depth expected at this level of luxury.

The main deck features a spacious 55-square-metre owner's suite positioned forward, offering panoramic views. The choice of materials in the suite echoes the wider design narrative – a tactile blend of natural fibres, woods and stone effects, selected to envelop the owner in comfort and tranquillity.

Complementing this is a voluminous main salon, also on the main deck, where expansive glazing allows natural light to flood the space. A second salon on the upper deck extends the onboard social zones, each space feeling distinct yet harmonised by a coherent design language.

Custom capability

The SD132 *Andiamo* is not merely about spaciousness, she is a study in how space can be personalised. The side garage, capable of housing a 6.32 metre tender and launching it transversely, is a rare feature in this size range and offers scope for bespoke layout adjustments. This area is further enhanced by a secondary hangar for water toys or a rescue boat, underscoring the vessel's capacity for adventure.

Meanwhile, the forward section of the fly deck houses a striking crystal-clear mini pool with an integrated sunbathing system, a refined retreat that extends the onboard lounging areas with an elegant focal point. “The exteriors also demonstrate a commitment to research,” says Zuccon, referencing “innovative layout solutions and technological flexibility [that] seamlessly integrate the yacht with the surrounding nature.”

Indeed, this sense of integration lies at the heart of *Andiamo*'s identity. Every space is designed to dissolve boundaries – whether between interior and exterior, guest and sea, or owner and environment.

Going the distance

While her aesthetic might suggest leisurely Mediterranean cruising, *Andiamo* is engineered for far more ambitious voyages. With a transoceanic range of 3,200 nm, she is suited for long-distance travel.

The SD132 platform offers the robust performance of a semi-displacement hull without sacrificing the elegance and finesse that owners have come to expect. “The result is an exceptionally sturdy yacht,” says the yard, “designed to ensure extended range capabilities for reaching even the most remote destinations.”

Andiamo sets a formidable precedent, one that reflects a confident, creative partnership between Sanlorenzo and Zuccon International Project.

“Every detail of the SD132 reflects the dedication and passion of our team, which has once again sought to challenge traditional limits related to onboard space and volume, achieving a remarkable result,” says Tommaso Vincenzi, CEO of Sanlorenzo.

Andiamo will be available to view at the Cannes Yachting Festival, where she is due to make her global debut. ●



EB YACHT SOLUTIONS (2)

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Design News

News Writer **Patrick Serinas** takes a look at the most unusual concepts unveiled by superyacht designers over recent months;

Interstellar | InMind Design Studio | 50-metres

Envisioned by her designers as a marine spacecraft, Interstellar is a 50-metre superyacht with futuristic aesthetics and spacious interiors. Interstellar’s magnificent architectural composition allows the yacht to serve unique functions at each deck ideal for accommodating different interests per guest. The multifunctional platform at the stern converts a helipad into a panoramic pool ensuring functionality and luxury.



INMIND DESIGN STUDIO: INTERSTELLAR



CONCEPTHULL: MINION

Minion | CONCEPTHULL Yacht Design | 27-metres

CONCEPTHULL’s 27-metre concept yacht *Minion* features a unique silhouette and clever architecture that is sure to captivate any naval aficionados onboard. Designed to navigate and explore the most remote locations and cruise long distances, Minion is designed for luxurious ocean living while providing guests vast living spaces with luxurious amenities that could be enjoyed by friends and family on cruise.

Edge | FPYD | 50-metres

Cutting-edge and flowing, the 50-metre superyacht concept *Edge* by FPYD displays fluidity in her architecture and design. Edge’s design reimagines the classic deck of a yacht, making it more flexible – living up to her concept of wind and water, ensuring smooth sailing and seamless indoor and outdoor living. With top-notch aesthetic and quality performance, Edge is set to be a standout in the landscape of superyachting.



GIAMBOI DESIGNS: EDGE



TONY CASTRO YACHT DESIGN

Sailing Yacht Concept | Tony Castro Yacht Design | 62-metres

The 62-metre sailing yacht concept by Tony Castro Yacht Design offers seamless indoor-outdoor living that could serve multiple purposes to her owners. The single-level arrangement of her main saloon and outdoor decks makes it easy to enjoy the amenities of each area. Accommodating a total of 12 guests across her elegantly-designed staterooms, the sailing yacht ensures luxury and comfort with spacious areas for guests to enjoy.

Project Velor | Nauta Design | 75-metres

Nauta Design’s 75-metre superyacht concept *Project Velor* is distinguished by her ability to be flexible in adapting to the owner’s liking whether for entertainment, friends and family fun, or for a quiet relaxation time. The four-deck superyacht concept boasts expansive open areas within her decks which makes exterior and interior spaces seamless. At a volume of 1,700 GT, Project Velor’s flexibility within her decks makes her an ideal yacht for family and friends with luxurious amenities onboard.



COURTESY OF NAUTA DESIGN

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Venue: Louvre Abu Dhabi, UAE

CRN Yachts
Italian, 1963–present

***Portrait of a cutting-edge 62-metre beauty, M/Y Rio.
Steel and aluminium on water.***

Courtesy of the CRN Yachts collection

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Design’s New Power Pairing

Two acclaimed Dutch designers join forces to launch **Weel Sluijter**, a bold new studio already making waves in the 50-metre-plus market. **Francesca Webster** sits down with the duo to find out more.



TOM VAN OOSSANEN



WEEL SLUIJTER

It is a rare moment when two established designers choose to combine their creative forces – yet that is precisely what has unfolded with the launch of Weel Sluijter. Formed in late 2024 by Dutch yacht designers Jim Sluijter and Bernd Weel, the Amsterdam-based studio has already made an impression.

The announcement of their partnership was delivered quietly during the Monaco Yacht Show last year, with a subtle social media post in place of a grand unveiling but the industry was quick to take notice. Within weeks, conversations were underway with shipyards and by autumn, the pair were fully engaged in their first collaborative project with a prominent Dutch yard.

While details of the project remain under wraps, the energy surrounding this creative union suggests it is one worth following closely. Francesca Webster caught up with Bernd and Jim to learn more about the direction of their new studio and the pivotal decisions already shaping their future portfolio.

Combining Forces

Jim Sluijter and Bernd Weel’s paths have long run in parallel; both hail from Alkmaar, both are products of design disciplines beyond yachting and both have built reputations through hands-on, build-informed design experience.

Sluijter’s career has spanned design departments at Winch Design, Azure and most recently at Lürssen, where he served as in-house exterior designer for five years. His credits include the 82-metre *Haven*, a project which he sees as a pivotal career moment. “After delivering *Haven*, I realised it was the right time to make a move,” he shares. “I wanted to build something of my own.”

Bernd Weel, meanwhile, established his eponymous studio more than a decade ago, having entered yacht design via architectural and automotive studies in Italy. His career-defining moment came early: an extensive refit of the 85-metre *Queen Miri*, which grew into a near three-year project. “It was a deep dive into everything, from technical meetings to design execution. I learned the industry from the inside out.”

Following the refit of *Queen Miri*, Bernd Weel Design became established in the motor yacht sector, predominantly designing yachts in the 25-40 metre segment. Long term partnerships with the likes of Lynx Yachts (now Outer Reef) and Holterman, bore excellent fruit, such as the highly regarded *Lady Fleur* and the 27.4-metre *Avontuur*.

Despite their differing trajectories, a chance encounter at the Cortina Design Weekend in 2023 sparked a friendship. “We realised we were the same age, from the same area and we just clicked,” Sluijter says. “There was no immediate plan to work together, it was just beers and creative conversations.”

That changed in January 2024, when Jim began to contemplate the foundation of his own studio and was looking at examples of profitable, existing design houses. “It is a tough move to make alone and the best



WEEL SLUIJTER

example I had of someone creating a successful studio themselves was Bernd, so I thought, perhaps he was the right person to work with.”

“Jim came to me and said, ‘Why don’t we start something together?’” Weel recalls. “At first, I was hesitant, I’d spent the past decade building something on my own and as a studio we had plenty of work to keep us busy, but I spoke with my wife and she was really supportive and got me excited about the opportunity to share the creative process with another designer I respect. After a few days of letting the idea sink in, it felt right.”

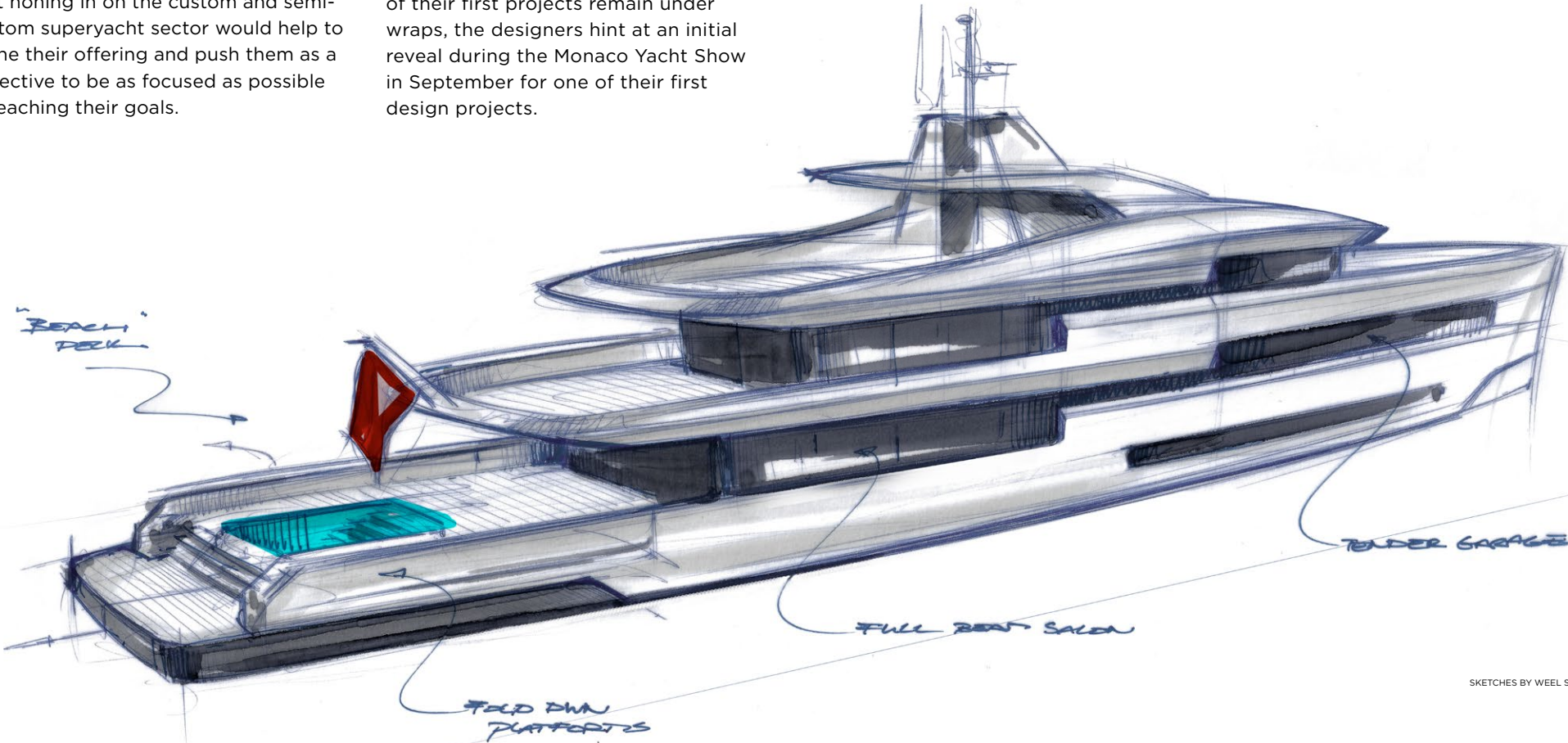
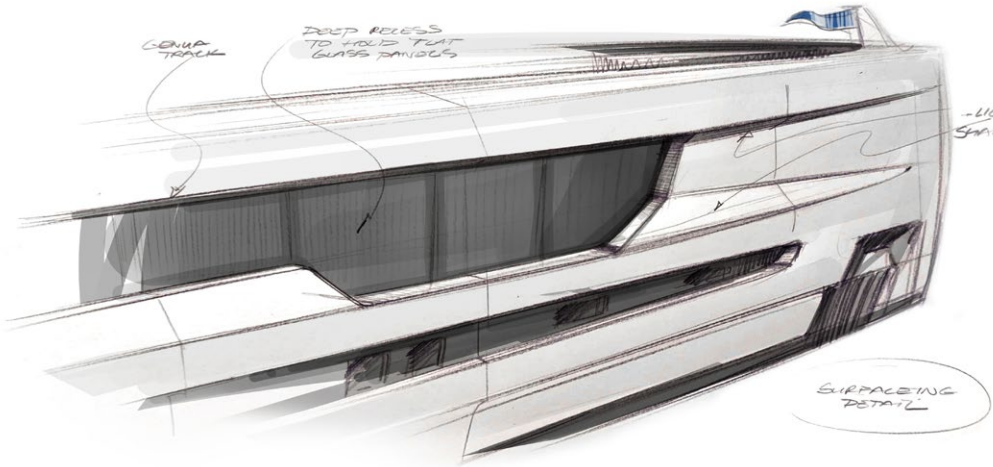
In order to come together, the duo made some big decisions, most significantly the decision to concentrate on the plus-50 metre segment and solely on exterior design. Not only does their combined experience lend itself to this market segment, but both felt that honing in on the custom and semi-custom superyacht sector would help to refine their offering and push them as a collective to be as focused as possible in reaching their goals.

A Collaborative Approach

What sets Weel Sluijter apart is not just the pedigree of its founders, but the clear and equal footing on which they’ve built their partnership. “From day one, it’s been 50/50,” says Bernd. “There’s no ego. We work together on every project, particularly during the creative process and we’ve both been surprised by how well the collaboration has worked.”

This approach is already bearing fruit. “We quickly realised that while we design differently, there’s mutual understanding in those differences,” Sluijter adds. “We trust each other’s instincts, that’s key.”

While the team remains compact, including studio operations lead Kika and two key freelance collaborators, the work already underway reflects their strategic direction. Though details of their first projects remain under wraps, the designers hint at an initial reveal during the Monaco Yacht Show in September for one of their first design projects.



SKETCHES BY WEEL SLUIJTER



WEEL SLUIJTER

Recipe for Success

Though still early days, the duo are already refining a shared design ethos. “We’re not trying to stamp out a single aesthetic,” says Sluijter. “Instead, we focus on tailoring each project to the client and the shipyard, while maintaining a recognisable standard of quality and creativity.”

Their pragmatic approach, shaped by years of experience working within shipyards and navigating build constraints, has quickly set them apart. “Clients appreciate that we’re not dreamers,” Weel notes. “We know how things are built and we know how to make ideas feasible.”

Their success thus far, they agree, is a combination of timing, reputation and relationships. “It helps that we’ve each built long-term connections in the industry,” says Sluijter. “Many of the people we’ve worked with over the last decade are now in senior roles and keen to collaborate.”

They also acknowledge a generational shift in the market. “We’re seeing more first-time owners in their thirties and forties,” Weel observes. “For them, legacy names might not mean much. They’re looking for fresh thinking and that’s what we offer.”

Looking Ahead

Asked what success looks like in five years, both designers are refreshingly aligned: “We both still want to be creative and proactive in the process of drawing our projects,” says Bernd. “We don’t want to become managers who are just running a team, the creative process is what drives us.”

That said, they acknowledge growth is inevitable. “We might add a few more designers, but the focus will always be on producing the best result,” says Sluijter. “Every idea goes on the wall. It’s not about who created it, it’s about what works best for the project.”

Amsterdam remains the studio’s home, a city they feel offers both creative energy and logistical advantages. Their waterfront office sits within a protected zone for creative businesses, surrounded by like-minded entrepreneurs. “It was important for us to be based here,” says Weel. “It reflects the identity we’re building.”

As for the projects in the pipeline, the duo remain tight lipped. “We don’t have a website yet, but people are calling us,” laughs Sluijter. “That’s a good sign, but now it’s about delivering and delivering perfectly.”

If early momentum is any indication, Weel Sluijter is a studio set not just to contribute to the next generation of yacht design, but to help define it. ●

Discover Dubai

Developing Dubai's maritime economy and global yachting hub



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Positioning Dubai for investment

Dubai's transformation from a modest trading port to a global hub for trade, tourism and maritime activity reflects its success in combining clear policy direction with strong public-private collaboration.

Speaking at the Asia-Pacific Superyacht Summit in May 2025, Issam Kazim, CEO of the Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM), part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), explained how the city has focused on building its infrastructure and attracting tourists from around the world. He detailed how the implementation of its diversification strategy had helped Dubai open the market quickly in the post-Covid era. More importantly, Dubai has become not just a repeat destination for many, it is now becoming home for people relocating family offices and headquarters.

At the core of this proposition are Dubai's favourable business climate and coordinated approach to development. In 2024, the emirate ranked as the world's leading destination for Greenfield foreign direct investment (FDI) for the fourth consecutive year, according to Financial Times Ltd.'s fDi Markets, attracting 52.3 billion dirhams (\$14.25 billion) in estimated FDI capital alone. This momentum aligns with the long-term goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, which aims to double the size of Dubai's economy by 2033 and further consolidate its position as a leading global destination for business and leisure.

Close cooperation between government and industry has been key to this progress. Regular consultation ensures infrastructure, regulations and sustainability measures align with investor expectations. As Kazim noted, truly understanding the industry and maintaining strong private-public sector partnerships have been "the backbone

of Dubai's success and will continue to be so going forward".

Public investment in major assets, such as the expansion of Nakheel Marinas and the redevelopment of Mina Rashid, is matched by private sector services ranging from maintenance and refit to technical support.

Dubai's appeal for yacht owners and marine businesses is also shaped by ease of access and strong connectivity. Flagship airlines and private aviation links connect the city to major markets, an advantage for high-net-worth individuals in Asia. With more than 5,000 berths across 22 marinas, Dubai offers capacity and technical services that rival long-established yachting centres. Kazim noted that this growth is clear in the increasing number of yachts and superyachts relocating to Dubai, if not permanently then for part of the year, to benefit from Dubai's winter climate and supporting infrastructure.

Visa policies and streamlined regulations further strengthen Dubai's competitive position. Programmes such as the Golden Visa, multi-entry visas and simplified superyacht registration make it easier for owners and operators to establish a long-term base. Foreign-flagged yachts are exempt from VAT and customs duties under certain permits, while the proposed GCC Unified Visa could expand regional cruising opportunities.

Complementing its business environment is a diverse destination offering. Luxury hotels, fine dining, cultural attractions and outdoor activities add to Dubai's appeal for owners and family offices. A record 18.72 million international visitors in 2024, up nine per cent year-on-year, underlines Dubai's position as a resilient tourism leader and an increasingly credible base for maritime investment and wealth.

Dock and Dine: Linking yachting and waterfront hospitality

As part of wider efforts to encourage short-stay yachting and strengthen Dubai's role as a maritime hub, the city has introduced the Dock & Dine initiative. Developed by the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) in collaboration with the Dubai Maritime Authority (DMA), the programme spans 20 marinas and marina stations across the city. It is described as the region's most extensive marina dining concept and supports the objectives of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33.

Designed for yacht owners, crews and guests seeking short-term berthing, Dock & Dine provides convenient access to a curated selection of restaurants, luxury hotels, cultural attractions and waterfront entertainment. Visitors can sail easily between different docks and dining venues, enjoying a diverse range of cuisines within a 45-minute to one-hour cruising radius.

Key features include complimentary moorage at participating marinas, quick booking response times, direct coordination with restaurants for reservations, and dedicated dock tenders for smooth drop-offs and pick-ups. A unified regulatory framework ensures a consistent, straightforward experience across the city's marinas.

By harmonising marina regulations and enhancing operational processes, the city is making it easier for foreign-flagged vessels to arrive and ensuring guests enjoy streamlined access and world-class service.

Making waterfront dining more accessible, the initiative supports Dubai's appeal as a year-round destination, especially during the peak winter season when favourable weather and a vibrant events calendar attract a growing number of international visitors. With thousands of berths available across its marina network, the city remains well positioned to accommodate a wide range of vessels, from smaller pleasure craft to larger superyachts.

Building on its growth as a global yachting hub, Dubai is adopting a more strategic and business-oriented approach to developing its maritime sector as part of its wider economic objectives. Through regulatory reform, targeted infrastructure investment and large-scale environmental initiatives, the city sees yachting not only as a lifestyle draw, but also as a catalyst for long-term business growth, innovation and inward investment.



DUBAI DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY AND TOURISM (2)

Truly understanding the industry and maintaining strong private-public sector partnerships have been “the backbone of Dubai’s success and will continue to be so going forward”.



Dubai Reef: A marine megaproject

A pioneering purpose-built reef development and one of the largest in the world, DUBAI REEF reflects the emirate's commitment to marine conservation. Spanning 600 square kilometres of Dubai's waters, the multi-faceted sustainability initiative is designed to enhance biodiversity, increase ecosystem resilience, and strengthen socio-economic prosperity and eco-tourism through its three main pillars: Marine Habitat Restoration, Marine Life Rehabilitation, and Marine Conservation Research.

The first pillar, the Marine Habitat Restoration programme, will see a total of 20,000 purpose-built reef modules of various sizes and shapes deployed across the project area by 2027. The reef modules will help restore marine habitat, boost fish populations, and increase ecosystem resilience. Pillar two, Marine Life Rehabilitation, supports the growth of indigenous marine species and will focus on coral restoration in its pilot phase. The third pillar, Marine Conservation Research, focuses on strategic academic partnerships with DUBAI REEF presenting a living platform for marine research, innovation, and marine conservation studies.

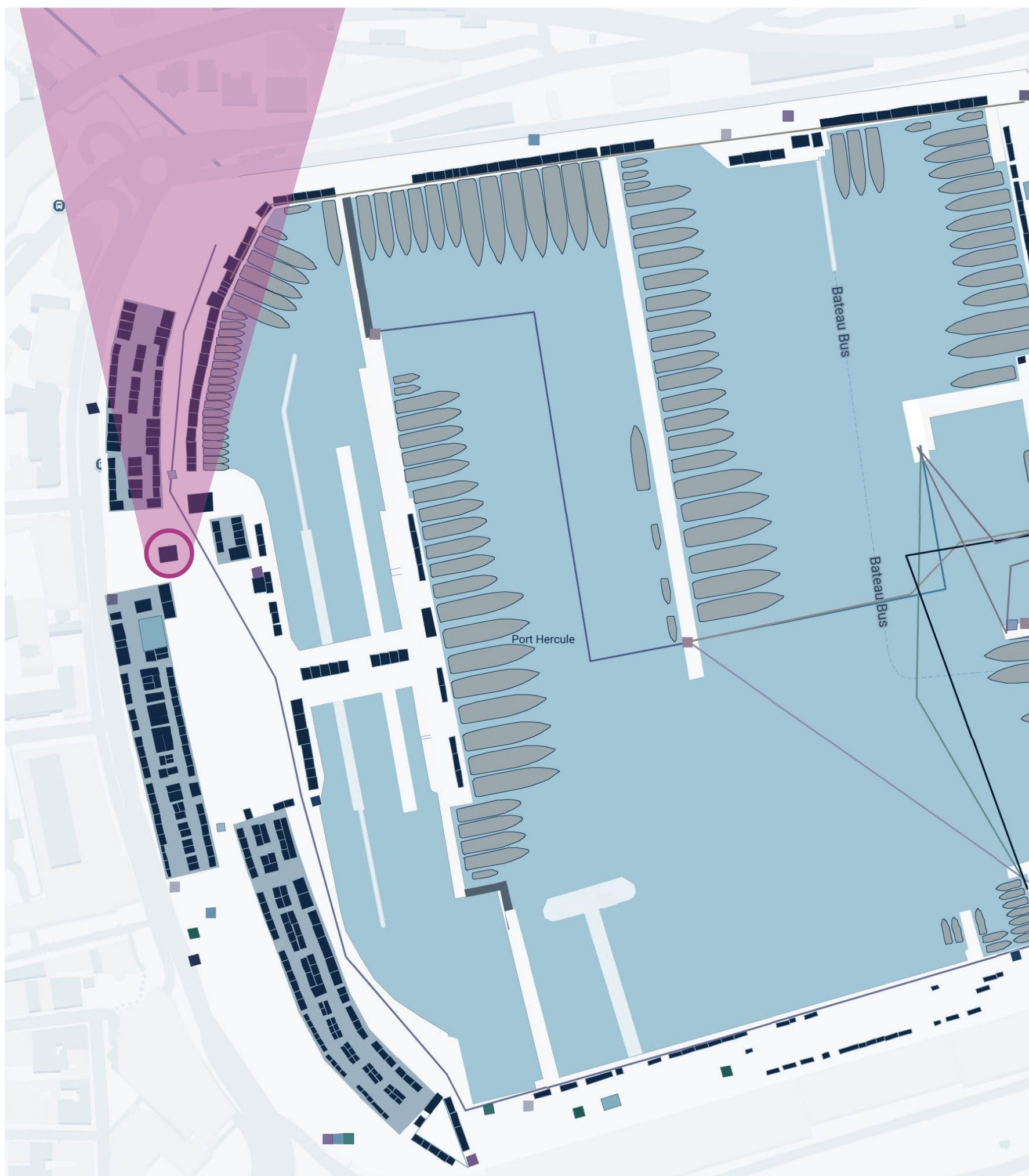
The result of a collaboration among key partners, who have come together from across the public and private sectors to realise shared sustainability objectives, DUBAI REEF contributes to global conservation efforts, directly supporting several United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Climate action (SDG 13), Life below water (SDG 14), and Partnerships (SDG 17).

To learn more, visit Dubai Tourism at the Monaco Yacht Show at stand PP76 (Parvis Piscine).

Meet Dubai Tourism at the Monaco Yacht Show 2025

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PP76 (PARVIS PISCINE)



Inside Enrico Gobbi’s Design Journey

Venetian designer **Enrico Gobbi** reflects on how Team for Design has evolved from designing smaller yachts to large-scale collaborations, and why proportion, space and emotion remain central to his approach. **Enrico Chhibber.**

“My inspiration to enter the yachting industry goes back to my childhood in Venice, a city intrinsically connected to the water. Growing up, I watched the yachting world expand, with ever larger and more impressive vessels arriving in the lagoon. Seeing these yachts up close while at university inspired me to follow this path,” remarks Enrico Gobbi, Founder of Team for Design.

Although Gobbi’s academic focus at the University of Venice was architecture, specifically the design of skyscrapers and large buildings, he always felt drawn to yacht design and began developing this specialisation through his own research. After graduating, he gained hands-on experience abroad, working in the design department at Meyer Werft in Papenburg, Germany for a luxury ship, which confirmed that yachting was the direction he wanted to pursue.



The evolution of Team for Design

Founded in 2005 Team for Design initially concentrated on smaller yachts. “We didn’t begin by designing 80 to 100-metre yachts; we started with smaller projects and built up gradually, gaining experience along the way,” Gobbi explains. One of the studio’s first works was the exterior design for a 23.95-metre Dominator motor yacht.

As the studio’s reputation grew, Team for Design took on larger commissions, collaborating extensively with the Italian shipyard Rossinavi. Their first project together was the 47.5-metre *Vellmari* in 2013, followed by the 65-metre *Utopia IV* in 2018 and, more recently, the 49.9-metre *BelI* in 2024, for which Gobbi handled the interior design. Team for Design has worked on the design of 13 superyachts with Rossinavi. “With Rossinavi alone we have designed many yachts. Rossinavi has really established itself as one of the prominent names in the industry and naturally our studio grew alongside that,” he says.

“It’s a complex challenge because you can’t simply make a sleek, elongated yacht and then expect it to have the same interior space as a navetta. We use design strategies, proportion adjustments and subtle styling solutions to maintain clean lines while offering more room inside,”



70.16-metre Rossinavi superyacht *Polestar*, previously named *Polaris*, launched in 2021 featuring a complete design from Team for Design and naval architecture from Arrabito Naval Architects.

Reflecting on this evolution, Gobbi notes that client demand has gradually shifted towards longer, more stylistic yachts. “I’ve seen our clients grow with us. Whether they’re returning owners or new referrals via brokers, they often want longer hulls with generous beam but relatively low gross tonnage, which gives us the freedom to craft elegant lines,” he observes.

He adds that the studio has yet to develop an 80-metre yacht with very high GT and layered decks. “Instead, the emphasis is on length and a clean profile, which I believe reflects a clear trend among our circle of clients. It may not represent the entire market, but for us it is the direction things are moving. The shipyards we work with often ask for concepts in this size range to help them sell future projects, so there is a consistent demand for stylish yachts above 70 or 80 metres.”

As for his personal favourites among the studio’s fleet, Gobbi says three stand out. “One is the 63-metre Rossinavi superyacht *Utopia IV*. The other is the 70.16-metre Rossinavi superyacht *Polaris* and the 65-metre superyacht *Resilience*. Those projects really absorbed me and gave me a great deal of satisfaction. The entire design process and the final result of both yachts make me truly proud.”

Current design trends

As for current design trends, Gobbi points to a clear shift in how owners balance style and interior volume. He observes that, unlike classic yachts which often featured sleek, highly streamlined profiles at the expense of interior space, today's clients want both. "In the past, many yachts were designed with dramatic, slender lines, but this often meant sacrificing internal volume. Now, owners still want a beautiful, well-proportioned yacht, but they also expect generous interior spaces," he explains. Meeting this demand requires a careful balance between exterior styling and practical layouts. "It's a complex challenge because you can't simply make a sleek, elongated yacht and then expect it to have the same interior space as a navetta. We use design strategies, proportion adjustments and subtle styling solutions to maintain clean lines while offering more room inside," he notes. Gobbi adds that for many owners, it is also about the impression the yacht gives at anchor; they want to arrive by tender, see a striking exterior silhouette and still have the interior comfort they expect. He also observes that certain styling details are becoming increasingly popular. "A trend that continues to grow is the flush foredeck in teak, which allows for a touch-and-go helipad or a more minimalist bow area. Many owners are drawn to this clean look," he says. Similarly, there is rising interest in open-plan spaces with loose furniture and flexible arrangements, particularly in the forward owner's areas, which are becoming more minimal and adaptable in new designs.



One of Gobbi's favourite projects, the 63-metre *Utopia IV* launched at Rossinavi in 2018. Below, the recently delivered *Bell*, another Rossinavi project, featuring an interior design from Team for Design and exteriors from Fulvio De Simoni.

TOM VAN OOSSANEN



ROSSINAVI

Future projects and developments

Looking ahead, Gobbi reveals that several collaborations are underway, including the 76.25-metre *Project Arrow* with Turquoise Yachts, due for delivery in 2026, as well as a growing relationship with ISA Yachts, part of the Palumbo Group. The studio is currently working on seven yachts under construction with ISA, several of which are large-scale projects. "It's often the owners who lead us to new shipyards, and then we develop the project together and choose the yard that best fits," he explains.

One project in particular that stands out for Gobbi is an 80-metre project currently in development with ISA. "If you think of *Utopia IV* as a sporty yacht, this 80-metre follows a similar philosophy but on a much larger scale. It is one of the largest sporty yachts of its kind, with only a few decks to maintain a sleek profile. An 80-metre yacht that feels like a grand coupé of the sea. I am very curious to see how it turns out, because achieving that sporty look at this size, with just three decks, is something quite special."

Gobbi also points to Team for Design's ongoing work with Tankoa Yachts, including a 49.9-metre project currently under construction for which the studio is responsible for the interiors, as well as the 68-metre concept *T680 Fenice*, where the studio is overseeing both the exterior and interior design.

Gobbi also highlights a major new collaboration with Baglietto, which includes a 56-metre custom yacht currently under construction, for which his studio is designing both the interior and exterior. Building on the style of this project, Team for Design is developing new custom yachts between 50 and 60-metres, following a fresh stylistic approach. The first concept in this direction, named *Vesta 56*, was unveiled in New York last month, and additional projects are now underway and will be presented at the Monaco Yacht Show. "For me, this is a source of real pride, because Baglietto has always been a brand I have admired for its history." ●



The 76.25-metre *Project Arrow* currently underway at Turquoise Yachts, featuring exterior design from Team for Design. She is due for delivery in 2026.

COURTESY OF TURQUOISE YACHTS

O'Madeleine Makes Monaco Debut

Delivered this year by Golden Yachts, the 60-metre superyacht *O'Madeleine* will make her debut at the Monaco Yacht Show, where she will showcase her cutting-edge design and bespoke interiors.

O'Madeleine continues Golden Yachts' longstanding collaboration with Studio Vafiadis and Studio Massari, whose combined approach has resulted in a vessel that pairs striking exterior lines with bespoke, nature-inspired living spaces. Massari Design was responsible for the interior quest areas, while Studio Vafiadis designed the exterior, guest suites and the bridge. Accommodating up to 12 guests across seven suites, she offers generous volumes and a calm, understated atmosphere throughout. "Building the 60-metre *O'Madeleine* has been a rewarding experience for our design, engineering and project team. This new superyacht reflects the design ambition and technical precision that define Golden Yachts. We are proud to present her to the world this September at the Monaco Yacht Show."

An interior of quiet luxury

According to Vafiadis, the interior of *O'Madeleine* combines Nordic minimalism with Mediterranean warmth, resulting in a serene, tactile environment where form follows feeling. Soft contours, natural finishes and a calm palette set the tone throughout, creating a sense of ease and restraint. "Our design approach blends Nordic simplicity with Mediterranean warmth, creating a calm and refined atmosphere throughout the interiors," explains Massari. "Light oak and bright tones form the foundational palette, offering a sense of serenity and openness. We focused on sculptural, custom-made furniture to maintain a domestic and relaxed character while ensuring visual interest and coherence."

Natural oak and creamy leather serve as the main materials, enriched by Venetian fabrics and brightly toned Italian leathers, with each suite subtly distinguished by its colour scheme. This layered use of texture contributes to a contemporary yet welcoming ambiance. Material choice plays a central role in the design language. "Finely grained wood panelling adds depth and texture," Massari adds. "Textured stingray leather, straw panels and hand-carved marble enhance the tactile and visual richness. These finishes were selected not only for their appearance but also for their craftsmanship and lasting quality."

"In the saloon and dining area, the narrative continues with a balance of utility and elegance," says Massari. "A handwoven rug anchors the lounge, while a backlit agate dining table provides a distinctive focal point, bold but harmonious within the broader scheme."

Vafiadis explains that generous windows fill the interior with daylight, accentuating the sculpted ceilings,

wooden louvres and integrated lighting. "We chose a layered, understated lighting strategy to enhance the forms and materials without overwhelming the spaces," Massari notes. "The aim was to create an inviting, comfortable environment, rather than something overtly formal."

Thoughtfully composed and carefully crafted, *O'Madeleine's* interior reflects a subtle balance between comfort and sophistication. "This design reflects a careful equilibrium," Massari concludes. "The final result is a timeless interior that supports both ease of living and aesthetic clarity."

Streamlined design with structural expression

O'Madeleine's exterior is defined by sharp lines and longitudinal ribbon windows that visually break up the yacht's volumes, creating the impression of greater length and a sleek, dynamic profile. According to Studio Vafiadis, these details serve to accentuate

the vessel's linearity and sense of movement, even when at rest.

A key architectural element, according to Vafiadis, is the sculptural side mullions supporting the top deck roof, a signature feature that blends structural integrity with visual purity. Recessed lighting in the aft sections highlights *O'Madeleine's* geometry at night, subtly transforming the exterior into a series of lit living areas.

As Vafiadis mentions, the beach club has been conceived to maximise natural light and views, with large windows set into either side of the hull and glazed staircases leading up to the main deck. An opening side hatch and water-level platform create a smooth connection between interior and exterior. Inside, a flexible garage can be configured to house a tender of up to 6.5-metres, while floor-to-ceiling glazing and generous hull windows amplify the sense of space.

On the top deck terrace, a shaded and air-conditioned veranda can be opened or closed as desired, framing a relaxed setting around a swimming pool and solarium. A central skylight draws natural light into the areas below, while an integrated awning system ensures continuity in both function and form.

The sundeck features flush deck doors that create a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor zones. This adaptable space includes a gym with en suite facilities, a fore-lounge with a custom-designed Jacuzzi, sunbeds and an outdoor cinema with projector. A further highlight is the lower deck beach club, which includes a spa, lobby, bar and lounge, a hammam and ample storage for water toys.

O'Madeleine is undoubtedly a testament to our commitment to excellence, innovation and timeless craftsmanship. With two exceptional 85-meter superyachts already in production, we continue to push the boundaries of luxury yacht building and look forward to sharing more in the near future." ●

Make sure to reach out to Golden Yachts to book your tour at the Monaco Yacht Show this September;
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STUDIO RESKOS



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Largest Superyachts at MYS 2025

Which groundbreaking superyachts, including global debuts, can you expect to spot at this year’s Monaco Yacht Show, with more than 50 debuts to choose from, this year is set to be a stand-out for new superyachts.

The Monaco Yacht Show is one of the most prestigious shows in the industry, showcasing a range of yachting companies including superyacht builders, designers and yacht brokers. This year’s event runs from 24th - 27th September in Port Hercules, Monaco. Here, we round up some of the extraordinary superyachts you can preview if you are attending the show.



Gigia | 85-metres

Builder: Lürssen Yachts
Launched: 2017 / Refitted in 2024
Volume: 2,850 GT
Exhibitor: Burgess

Delivered in 2017 by the German shipyard Lürssen, *Gigia* features exterior styling by Winch Design, defined by a classic sheer line, clean white hull and softly tiered decks that echo her timeless aesthetic.

BURGESS

Energy | 77.8-metre

Builder: Amels
Launched: 2022
Volume: 2,884 GT
Exhibitor: Co-exhibited by Fraser and Burgess

Energy’s exterior displays spacious outdoor areas, allowing panoramic views and she is well suited for socialising activities. She features Espen Øino International for exterior, Zuretti Interior Design for interior, and Damen Yachting took charge of *Energy*’s exceptional naval architecture.



COURTESY OF AMELS

DEBUT



RUBEN GRIFFIOEN

Valour | 79.5-metres

Builder: Feadship
Launched: 2025
Volume: 2,117 GT
Exhibitor: Feadship

De Voogt Naval Architects are both the naval architect and exterior designer, bringing sleek lines and a slightly flared bow to *Valour*’s exterior. Interior design has been executed by the London-based Bannenberg & Rowell. She is set to be one of the most sought after debuts and this year’s show.

RAFALE

80m / 265ft



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LORENZO TAMPUCCI

Amalya (Project 595) | 77.7-metres

Builder: Admiral
Launched: 2025
Volume: 2,350 GT
Exhibitor: Admiral, The Italian Sea Group

The superyacht's exterior profile makes an impression with a distinctive blue colour, as well as the fluid and dynamic line spanning from bow to stern. The 78m yacht features Interior and exterior design created by Sinot Yacht Architecture & Design. Meanwhile, her naval architecture was crafted in-house by TISG.

After You (Project 596) | 72-metre

Builder: Admiral
Launched: 2025
Volume: 2,104 GT
Exhibitor: The Italian Sea Group

This all-Italian yacht is a collaboration of Armani/Casa and Admiral: the exterior design is Armani/Casa and Admiral, naval architecture by Admiral and interior design is penned by Armani/Casa.



GIULIANO SARGENTINI



BENOIT DONNE

Lady Marina | 63.95-metres

Builder: Feadship
Launched: 1999
Volume: 1,279 GT
Exhibitor: Co-exhibited by Moravia Yachting and Merle Wood & Associates

Lady Marina has a unique Donald Starkey exterior design unlike any other Feadship before her, with a large helicopter landing deck and raised pilothouse deck above the owner's private observation lounge. She was originally commissioned by an experienced owner.

Simena | 61.61-metres

Builder: Ares Yachts
Launched: 2025
Volume: 498 GT
Exhibitor: Ares Yachts

This motor sailer yacht has an interior design penned by Design Unlimited, while her exterior is designed by Tara Yacht Design. She is one of most unique launches of 2025 and is expected to be a popular yacht during the show.



COURTESY OF ARES YACHTS

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After You | 60.2-metre

Builder: Damen Yachting
Launched: 2025
Volume: 1,143 GT
Exhibitor: Damen Yachting

This explorer yacht features exterior design by Azure Yacht Design, while her interior was penned by H2 Yacht Design, with naval architecture by Damon Yachting.



DAMEN YACHTING

DEBUT



THE ITALIAN SEA GROUP

Katana | 60-metres

Builder: Perini Navi
Launched: 2025
Volume: 493 GT
Exhibitor: The Italian Sea Group

Katana features an exterior design from Perini Navi, while Rémi Tessier designed her interior. Her naval architecture is by Ron Holland Design and she is the first mono-hull launched under the brand's ownership by The Italian Sea Group.

Scott Free | 60-metres

Builder: Abeking & Rasmussen
Launched: 2009 | Refit in 2022
Volume: 1,090 GT
Exhibitor: Burgess

Originally navy blue, following the refit, the yacht features a new light blue custom paint colour with a light silver boot stripe and a dark charcoal superstructure and mast. The late world-renowned artistic director of Louis Vuitton's menswear, Virgil Abloh was involved in the refit and rebranded her Scott Free. Her new interiors have been designed by Bannenberg & Rowell Design.



BURGESS

DEBUT



DAMEN YACHTING

Memories | 60-metres

Builder: Amels
Launched: 2025
Volume: 853 GT
Exhibitor: Exhibited by Damen Yachting

Memories' exterior is designed by Espen Øino, with naval architecture by Damen Yachting as part of the successful Amels 60 Limited Editions series. Her interior is designed by Harrison Eidsgaard.

FORTY *MXP
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O'Madeleine | 60-metres

Builder: Golden Yachts
Launched: 2025
Volume: 1,305 GT
Exhibitor: Golden Yachts

Launched in May 2025, construction on *O'Madeleine* began in 2023 under the GY60 series, with exteriors, guest suites and the bridge designed by Studio Vafiadis and interior areas crafted by Massari Design. Defined by sharp lines and continuous windows which span her superstructure, *O'Madeleine* boasts a sleek and sophisticated design.



STUDIO RESKOS

DEBUT



BURGESS

Stella Mi | 60-metres

Builder: Amels
Launched: 2021
Volume: 1,015 GT
Exhibitor: Burgess

Delivered in 2021 as the first Amels 200 Limited Editions yacht, *Stella Mi* features delicate and fluid lines to create a timeless silhouette. *Stella Mi* was designed by world-renowned designer Tim Heywood, who was responsible for her exterior design, alongside interior design by UK-based Reymond Langton Design.

Alfa G | 60-metres

Builder: Oceanco
Launched: 2004 | Refit in 2024
Volume: 1,184 GT
Exhibitor: Superyacht Partners

Delivered in 2004 and having undergone a transformative €20-million refit in 2024, *Alfa G* features exterior design and naval architecture crafted in-house by Oceanco, while her interiors were penned by Alexandre Thiriat and Winch Design. The refit was successfully completed within 10 months by G&K Yachting.



COURTESY OF OCEANCO



JEFF BROWN

Vision | 60-metres

Builder: Benetti
Launched: 2011
Volume: 1,008 GT
Exhibitor: Camper & Nicholsons

Vision features exterior design by Stefano Natucci and naval architecture by Benetti. The stunning interior is the work of two French design studios: Zuretti and Pierre-Yves Rochon. She can accommodate up to 12 guests across six staterooms.

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Maximus | 59.29-metres

Builder: Vitters
Launched: 2023
Volume: 395 GT
Exhibitor: Co-exhibited by Edmiston and Vitters

Delivered in 2024 by her Dutch builder, the yacht features exterior design and naval architecture both crafted by German Frers, while her interior styling was penned by Spencer-Churchill Designs.

Perla Lunar | 58-metre

Builder: Sanlorenzo
Launched: 2025
Volume: 1,165 GT
Exhibitor: Sanlorenzo

The first hull from the Sanlorenzo 58Steel series, *Perla Lunar* was launched in the Spring and features an exterior and interior design from Zuccon International Projects, with naval architecture from her builder.



DEBUT

COURTESY OF SANLORENZO



LORENZO TAMPUCCI

Raja2 | 55.2-metre

Builder: Admiral
Launched: 2025
Volume: 499 GT
Exhibitor: The Italian Sea Group

This motor yacht features exterior and interior design by Centro Stile Design, and feature snaval architecture by Admiral.

Solemates | 55-metres

Builder: Heesen
Launched: 2025
Volume: 760 GT
Exhibitor: Heesen Yachts

The *Solemates* features exterior design by Omega Architects, while her interior was penned by Luca Dini Design & Architecture, with naval architecture by Van Oossanen Naval Architects.



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A Global Forum for the Future of Marinas

This October, the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) will once again gather the world's foremost marina professionals, developers and policymakers for the highly anticipated 2025 edition of the International Waterfront and Marina Conference (IWMC), set in the heart of Venice. Running from 14-17 October, the event promises a compelling blend of thought leadership, networking and celebration, against the backdrop of one of the world's most iconic maritime cities.

A Venetian welcome

The conference will open informally on the evening of 14 October with a welcome cocktail reception in central Venice, offering early arrivals a relaxed opportunity to connect amid the timeless allure of the city. The formal agenda begins on 15 October at 09:00, with opening remarks and addresses from institutional figures. These speakers will not only represent their respective political and regional positions but also help frame the global challenges and ambitions facing the marina and waterfront industry today. Venice's own maritime legacy – a city

shaped by water for over a thousand years – will serve as a fitting thematic foundation. A unique edu-tainment segment will celebrate the city's millennial resilience, innovation and conservation efforts in the delicate ecosystem of the Venetian Lagoon, a UNESCO World Heritage site now being hailed as “the most ancient city of the future”.

Keynotes, panels and disruptive dialogues

The conference will then shift its focus to contemporary industry matters, starting with keynote speeches from the CEOs of Ferretti Group and Safe Harbor. The morning will continue with the Marina Market of the World panel, featuring continental representatives in a lively exchange of regional insights and outlooks.

A major highlight will follow with a session exploring the dynamics of the American yachting market – still the largest globally – with speakers from MarineMax, Suntex and Safe Harbor, moderated by ICOMIA's newly appointed President, Frank Hugelmeyer. The afternoon will introduce a series of four ‘disruptive’ presentations, beginning with the Italian Navy's

Amerigo Vespucci tall ship and its globe-spanning mission to promote Made in Italy excellence. This will be followed by a panel exploring the evolving relationship between marinas and shipyards, before TYHA's unveiling of a revised Code of Practice. Accreditation and quality certification will also take centre stage, with discussions covering ISO, Gold Anchor, Blue Flag and other key standards guiding marina development. Later, renowned American consultants Dan Natchez and Kenny Jones will lead the Wow Factor panel – promising a forward-thinking take on marina appeal and design excellence. Energy and sustainability issues will round out the day, with back-to-back panels on facility energy management and future fuel solutions, including hydrogen and nuclear, concluding with sessions on accessibility, HR and inclusion.

Recognising excellence

On 16 October, delegates will embark on curated tours of Venice's marina infrastructure, with groups travelling south to Chioggia or northeast to Lignano. The day will culminate in a gala dinner at the historic Arsenale, where the prestigious Golden Cleat award will be presented in recognition of a

distinguished marina career. The host for the 2026 IWMC will also be revealed.

America's Cup, AI and innovation

The final day on 17 October will begin with a third disruptive presentation on the 2027 America's Cup, to be hosted in Naples, and its role in regenerating the former industrial area of Bagnoli. Key sessions will follow on marina chains, charter trends, M&A impacts (including Safe Harbor's recent case with Blackstone), regulatory challenges and insurance innovations. The concluding afternoon promises a strong finish, with panels on floating infrastructure, digitalisation and AI integration, followed by presentations from marina suppliers and a showcase of new visionary projects – strategically placed to retain delegate attention until the end. Final remarks will be given by ICOMIA past president Darren Vaux, with Joe Linch and Frank Hugelmeyer closing the conference before the farewell celebration. With its rich programme, high-profile speakers and iconic setting, the ICOMIA Venice Conference is poised to be a defining moment for the global marina community. ●



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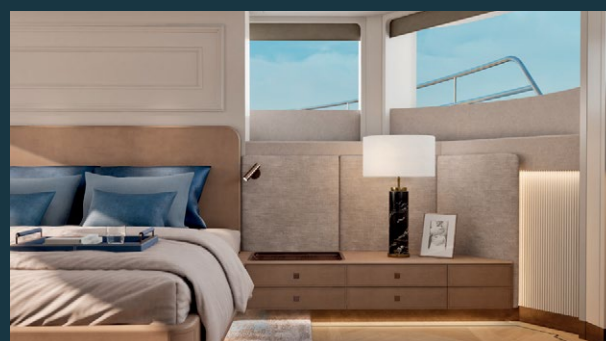
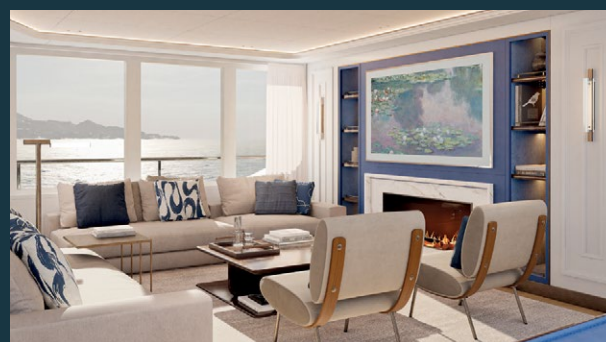
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Japan in the Spotlight

Enrico Chhibber speaks with Japan-based yachting experts to explore recent regulatory reforms and infrastructure developments that are gradually positioning Japan as a more accessible and appealing destination for superyachts.

When it comes to attractive superyacht destinations in Asia, Thailand has traditionally taken the spotlight. Japan, meanwhile, has remained a lesser-known cruising ground and has often been viewed as logistically challenging. Today, however, that narrative is changing, as Japan begins to reposition itself on the global yachting map.

The Japanese archipelago, comprising more than 14,000 islands and stretching over 34,000 kilometres of coastline, spans approximately 3,000 kilometres from north to south. With climates ranging from the snowy winters of Hokkaido to the subtropical warmth of Okinawa, the country offers year-round cruising opportunities and a broad range of geographical and cultural experiences.

Yet despite these natural advantages, Japan has not historically appealed to the international superyacht community. Regulatory complexities and limited marina infrastructure for larger vessels have, until recently, presented notable hurdles to its development as a cruising destination. This landscape is now beginning to evolve. Since 2021, a series of regulatory reforms have made it easier for privately registered, foreign-flagged yachts to enter and cruise Japanese waters.

Further momentum followed in December 2024 with the announcement of Superyacht Base Kobe Marina, which is currently under construction, with a full yacht service opening in 2026 and a full opening with surrounding infrastructure taking place in 2027. The project is intended to help address longstanding infrastructural limitations and support Japan's efforts to attract more superyacht tourism.

Marina infrastructure development in Japan

Although Japan's general maritime infrastructure is well developed, facilities specifically designed for superyachts remain limited. Nigel Beatty, yacht broker at YACHTZOO and Chairman of the Asia-Pacific Superyacht Association, observed that while the country is well-equipped overall, it lacks dedicated infrastructure tailored to the operational needs of larger yachts. "Infrastructure is brilliant in Japan, but if you're talking about purely superyacht infrastructure, then we are lacking a little bit," he said.

In most cases, visiting yachts cruise along the coast, anchoring near beaches or making brief stops at town piers. According to Beatty, this pattern highlights the need for more structured superyacht hubs and ports where large yachts can access services such as mooring, refuelling, provisioning, and guest handling. "When you go cruising, you anchor or tie up at a town pier for a night, then move on," he explained. "But you also need hubs, places where yachts can come in and operate with proper support."

Some capacity does exist. A marina in Fukuoka, for example, can currently host a small number of larger vessels. However, the most significant development is taking place in Kobe, where a new marina is under construction. Announced in late 2024, Superyacht Base Kobe Marina

is being developed to accommodate yachts up to 80-metres in length for stern to dockage and any size for alongside dockage. Just in the last few months the facility has accommodated a 70-metre and a 117-metre. Beatty noted that the basin is roughly half the size of Port Hercule in Monaco.

Yukio Shintani of Creation Marine, a lead investor who has played a role in coordinating stakeholders for the Kobe project, confirmed the marina is being established as a destination facility and is expected to open within two years. Once complete, it will serve as one of the first ports in Japan specifically designed to support visiting superyachts at scale.

While Japan does not yet offer the density of dedicated infrastructure found in more established superyacht destinations, ongoing developments suggest a gradual shift toward greater accessibility and operational support.

Before the Change: Superyacht regulations in Japan prior to 2021

Although foreign-flagged superyachts were technically permitted to enter and cruise in Japan before 2021, a combination of bureaucratic complexity and limited facilities made the country a difficult destination to navigate. As Nigel Beatty noted, "Whether commercially or privately registered, Japan never really drew a strong distinction between yacht types. Superyachts have technically been able to visit Japan for quite some time. The issue was the bureaucracy involved. While we used to manage it, the process was labour-intensive, and that translated into high costs for visiting yachts."



SUPERYACHT BASE/APSA



NIGEAL BEATTY

Japan did offer a relative advantage for crew from visa waiver countries. “There have always been positive aspects to cruising in Japan,” Beatty added. “For example, if you were from a visa waiver country, such as those in Europe or North America, you could enter Japan by yacht and remain for up to 90 days as a tourist, even as crew.”

However, crew from non-waiver countries such as South Africa, India and the Philippines, who represent a significant portion of the global yachting workforce, faced more complications. These individuals were required either to obtain a visa in advance or rely on a short-term crew pass valid for just 14 days. “Renewing it involved leaving the country and re-applying at an immigration office,” Beatty said. “Approval often depended on the discretion of the local immigration office, which made the process inconsistent and inefficient.”

Kenta Inaba, President and Partner at Super Yacht Logistics, described how procedural rigidity once defined the experience for visiting yachts. “In the past, every time a yacht entered Japan, we had to process customs, immigration and quarantine, not just on arrival but again at each subsequent port,” he explained. “When I started in this business, I had to submit a full list

of every port the yacht was planning to visit. But yachts don’t follow fixed routes like commercial vessels. Their movements are often dictated by weather and anchorage conditions, which makes rigid planning difficult.” Even minor navigational changes could create problems. “If a yacht was anchored and the wind shifted, they might need to move to another part of the bay. But if that area wasn’t listed in the original plan, it became an issue,” Inaba said. “Even bringing something as simple as a bottle of beer back onboard required paperwork.” The system, he added, was not designed with yachts in mind.

**Turning Point:
The 2021 regulatory reforms**

Regulatory changes introduced in 2021 significantly altered how Japan manages visiting superyachts. Previously constrained by complex procedures, foreign-flagged vessels now benefit from a more streamlined regulatory environment. “Much of that red tape has now been removed,” Beatty said. One of the most significant adjustments was the introduction of the Naikosen (similar to a cruising permit). After completing initial customs, immigration and quarantine procedures, yachts can apply for the permit, which, along with a blanket Closed Port Permit, removes the requirement to file repeated clearances at each domestic port. “Yachts used to be required to declare every intended stop in advance, which was completely impractical,”

Inaba said. “Now, they have the flexibility to change course depending on conditions.” One of the more favourable regulations that was always in place in Japan is that foreign registered vessels remain indefinitely in Japan allowing for longer and more adaptable cruising schedules and possibly basing themselves in the country long term.

Changes to crew entry procedures have addressed previous constraints. The introduction of the Multiple Landing Permit, or “Crew Pass,” allows foreign crew to remain in Japan for the duration of the yacht’s stay; and even up to one year. This replaces the former 14-day restriction that often-required multiple renewals and placed a disproportionate burden on those from non-waiver countries. The Crew Pass allows crew ashore in the local areas that the yacht will be for yacht business, shopping or sightseeing.

Crew from countries covered by Japan’s visa waiver programme continue to benefit from 90-day tourist access, allowing for greater flexibility to travel ashore or explore the length while the vessel is in port. Together, these updates have reduced many of the operational constraints that previously discouraged superyacht visits.

Japan is now better aligned with international practices and more accessible to a global yachting audience; and in some areas have more favourable regulations than well-established yachting countries.

Looking Ahead

Japan’s regulatory progress in recent years has laid important groundwork, but further improvements will be necessary to support charter activity. In particular, foreign-flagged, commercially registered yachts still face regulatory hurdles when seeking to operate charters in Japanese waters. Shintani acknowledged this ongoing challenge. “I want to try to create everything for the foreign-flagged yacht to charter. This is our mission.” While Japanese-flagged yachts can operate commercially, the charter process for foreign-flagged vessels remains undecided, however moves are afoot to make a rule for foreign charter yachts with a charter contract already developed by Hill Dickinson and Asia Pacific Superyacht Association, which navigates specific Japanese regulations. The solution to this issue will be an important next step in positioning Japan as a competitive superyacht destination in the Asia-Pacific region.



NIGEAL BEATTY



SUPERYACHT BASE/APSA



VINCENT VAN DEN STORME

UNSPLASH: ALISON PANG



SIMENA



ARES
YACHTS

The Next Generation of Explorer Yachts

A seamless blend of practicality and adaptability, Features Editor **Leona Caanen** explores Bering 165.

In the ever-evolving world of superyachts, few vessels strike the perfect balance between rugged capability and sophisticated comfort. The 49-metre Bering 165 redefines the explorer yacht category with a bold mix of endurance, strength, elegance, and liveability. With her 9-metre beam, B165 is the flagship of Bering Yachts’ lineup and one of the most in-demand designs on the market today.

Built for oceans, designed for life

Crafted with a full-displacement steel hull and aluminum superstructure, the B165 is a true ocean-going vessel ready for long journeys. With a gross tonnage of 499 GT, she is engineered for resilience in all conditions. Powered by twin 1,300 HP Caterpillar engines, B165 comfortably cruises at a speed of 10 knots, with a maximum of 15 knots. Her fuel capacity of 65,000 liters gives Bering 165 a range exceeding 5,000 nautical miles. Stabilisation systems ensure onboard comfort both underway and at anchor. However, B165 is more than just numbers. She is an explorer through and through with her ability of long-range cruising, but her warm, relaxed yet elegant interior feels like a luxury home.

Design that breathes

Designed by the Swiss studio Valentin Design, B165 is a mix of elegance and robust engineering. Valentin Design states that “Bering 165 epitomizes a distinctive crossover explorer, seamlessly blending the practicality and adaptability of a genuine transoceanic vessel with the refined allure and sophistication inherent in a design focused on experiential motor yachting.” For the designers, the main objective was to create “genuine added value to the onboard lifestyle.” Not only in living spaces, tenders and toys and load capacity, but also in B165’s performance in both warm and cold climates. To create a well-balanced, functional design, the focus had to lie beyond mere aesthetics. “Every space, whether interior or exterior, has been meticulously crafted and thoughtfully integrated into the overall design language and direction,” says Valentin Design. The result? A new flagship model for Bering, fusing form and function.

A deck designed for both

The Main Deck hosts the saloon, providing generous space for lounging, entertaining, and socialising. Two large VIP guest cabins, also situated on the main deck, instead provide luxurious, private accommodation. On the forward, a flexible space can be configured as a cosy cinema or an additional guest suite. A defining feature of the B165 is its flexible aft layout. Owners can tailor

the yacht to their lifestyle, switching between a stunning swimming pool or an expansive beach club. A highlight of the B165 design is the owner’s deck: nearly 70 square meters of private interior space. The owner’s suite (32m²) includes an en suite bathroom and walk-in wardrobe. The remaining 37m² holds a sky lounge, equipped with a bar, a seating area, and a dining table. The aft section of the owner’s deck is dedicated to a private lounge area, equipped with a sunbed, Jacuzzi, and cosy seating, ideal for relaxing with uninterrupted sea views.

Guests, too, can enjoy a luxurious comfort in one of the three guest cabins, situated on the lower deck. When not lounging and relaxing, there are numerous amenities onboard, designed for entertainment, including a private cinema and a game room. A crow’s nest provides a unique, secluded lookout perfect for stargazing, quiet reflection, or spotting distant horizons.

Explorer meets charter star

At Bering, crew comfort is a top priority, after all, a well-cared-for crew ensures

a seamless guest experience. The lower deck of B165 houses five cabins, comfortably accommodating up to 10 crew members. The main galley is also located here, offering ample storage and refrigeration capacity for extended voyages. The captain’s quarters are located on the bridge, providing access to the wheelhouse for efficient command. The crew doesn’t only care for the owner, but also for charter guests. Bering 165’s smart layout, long range, and luxurious amenities make her ideal for experience-driven travelers seeking adventure without sacrificing comfort. Whether used privately or for charter, the B165 offers incredible flexibility. Her design encourages seamless movement between indoor and outdoor spaces, provides privacy without isolation, and allows for comfortable cruising with family, friends, or guests.

High global demand

Interest in the B165 is growing rapidly, with multiple hulls in discussion. The model seems especially attractive to experienced yacht owners seeking autonomy and modern design. The B165 reflects a broader shift in the yachting world, from static luxury to meaningful, mobile experience. Owners are increasingly looking for yachts that allow them to confidently explore remote places and stay aboard for longer periods without compromise. The B165 delivers on all fronts. 🌐



BERING YACHTS (2)



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W130 | 40M

W135 | 41M

W172 | 52M

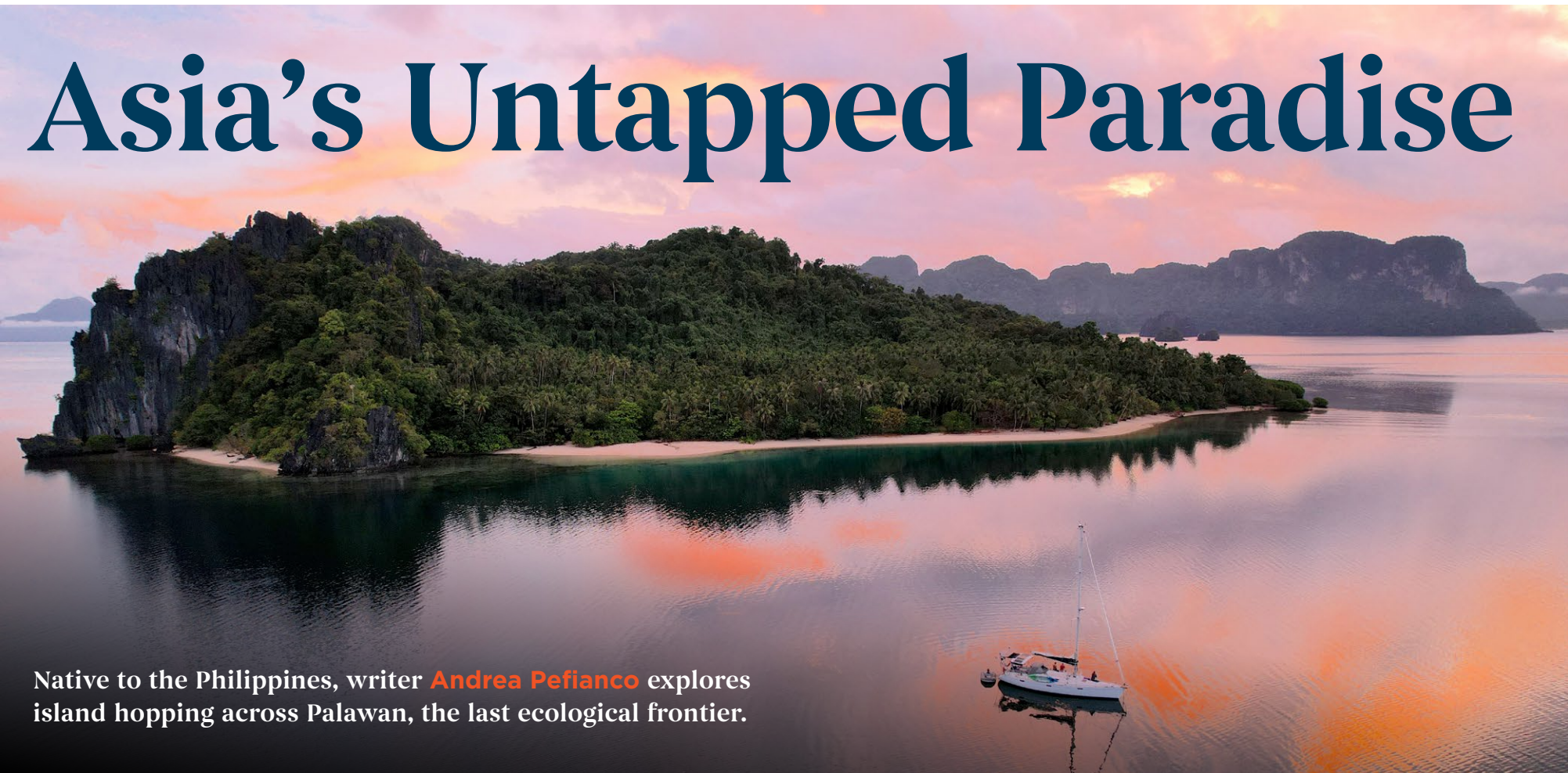
Designed with flexibility and charter in mind, the brand new W172 Tri-Deck accommodates twelve guests within six spacious staterooms including a main deck master with a private balcony. This next-generation yacht offers expanded onboard spaces, Gyro at-rest stabilization and an immense beach club.

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Native to the Philippines, writer **Andrea Pefianco** explores island hopping across Palawan, the last ecological frontier.

We sat down with Didier Novo of LXV Philippines to explore the secluded islands, caves and crystalline lagoons that make the stunning archipelagic province of Palawan one of Asia’s premier luxury cruising destinations.

Out of more than 7,000 islands in the Philippines, the province of Palawan boasts over 1,700 islands and inlets, making it the perfect setting for the ultimate luxury island-hopping experience. Located in the southwest of the archipelagic nation, Palawan is known as the Philippines’ “last ecological frontier.”

It is home to mesmerising crystal-clear lagoons framed by towering limestone cliffs, world-class diving with whale sharks and manta rays at the UNESCO World Heritage Site Tubbataha Reefs and rich terrestrial biodiversity, which houses the Palawan hornbill and other endemic species.

Much of this richness exists because Palawan is biogeographically linked to Borneo, forming part of the Sundaland region. This ancient connection has endowed the province with a tapestry

of flora and fauna more closely related to Southeast Asia than to the rest of the Philippines, making it a truly unforgettable destination.

It’s no wonder Palawan attracted over 1.5 million visitors in 2023. Yet, for those seeking the same breathtaking island scenery away from the crowds, luxury cruising offers a more private and immersive way to experience its natural beauty, far from the usual tourist trails.

What sets Palawan apart from neighbouring Southeast Asian cruising destinations is its remoteness. “It gives the opportunity to really be alone in the wild,” explained luxury concierge agency LXV Philippines CEO Didier Novo, who personally curates the tours for guests. “Here you will spend the full day without seeing one other boat. You feel like you’re the one discovering this place, like you’re stepping on an island where people have never seen any tourists.”

Despite Palawan’s breathtaking natural beauty, its yachting infrastructure is still in the early stages of development. Unlike well established cruising destinations, Palawan offers only a limited number of marinas, formal moorings and provisioning points,

making logistics a challenge. Therefore, basic supplies including fresh food can sometimes be scarce and more expensive.

Aeroplane access is available through the airports of Puerto Princess, Coron and El Nido. While transfers, particularly from the capital city of Puerto Princesa can be time consuming, the rewards are exceptional for those who are willing to venture off the beaten path.

Regardless of the remote setting and the hassle of airport transfers, guests can enjoy a beautifully appointed yacht, complete with a well-trained Filipino crew known for their warm hospitality. A range of tailored activities makes the experience feel as comfortable and effortless as being at home.

“Palawan allows me to have a huge diversity of activities and to see different underwater or overwater day tours,” added Didier, noting that the region gives his agency the flexibility to design itineraries where no two days are the same, entirely shaped around the preferences of each guest.

Although the region is off the beaten track for many yachts, there are familiar faces among the fleet here, such as the aptly named 42.5-metre futuristic trimaran *Adastra*. Named after the Latin phrase meaning “to the stars,” the yacht was built by McConaghy Boats at their Zhuhai facility in China and is one of the world’s most distinctive multihull vessels, designed by John Shuttleworth of Shuttleworth Design. A familiar sight among the islands of the Philippines, *Adastra* has been cruising the region for a number of years, as has the elegant 45.5-metre tri-deck yacht *Princess Iolanthe*, built by Mondo Marine. She boasts abundant inviting spaces perfect for family and friends to gather, including expansive outdoor decks and a Jacuzzi.

While Palawan boasts countless breathtaking destinations, this six-day cruise focuses on a curated route from Busuanga southward to El Nido. The journey begins with a welcome stop at Apo Reef, technically outside Palawan’s

boundaries, but a natural waypoint for vessels en route to the islands. As the largest contiguous coral reef system in the Philippines and second only to Australia’s Great Barrier Reef, Apo Reef teems with marine life, hosting over 500 species of fish and 400 species of coral. Guests can dive alongside sharks and turtles or snorkel through its vibrant shallow coral gardens.

The journey continues to West Busuanga, where a storied past and untouched seascapes meet. Beneath the glassy surface of Lusong Coral Garden lies one of the twelve sunken World War II ships, some of the most accessible wreck dives in the world. Once a vessel of the Imperial Japanese Navy, now it serves as coral-draped monuments explored by divers of all levels. But not all beauty lies in depth. On the northern fringes of Caluit and Dimipac Islands, dugongs drift lazily through the seagrass shallows. To swim beside these elusive “sea cows” is an almost sacred initiation into Palawan’s beauty.

A detour to Malajon Island, more widely known as Black Island, offers a striking change of scenery. Named for its dramatic black and grey limestone cliffs that rise sharply from the sea, the island is part of the ancestral domain of the Tagbanwa Tribe, one of Palawan’s indigenous groups. In this mystical corner, a massive cave that hides a crystal-clear natural pool, supplied by a gentle waterfall can be explored. As the day fades on Debotunay Island, there is a chance to gather barefoot by the bonfire, with the sea whispering back the memories of the day in every wave.

The third day begins with a ten-minute hike from a nearby lagoon to the famed Kayangan Lake on Coron Island. Fed by saltwater and nestled among towering limestone cliffs, it is one of the “big three” natural wonders of the area, along with the Twin Lagoons and Barracuda Lake. The cerulean waters invite a refreshing swim.

Just to the south lies the iconic Twin Lagoons, a site often bustling with tourists. Cruises are coordinated during the midday lull, when most groups retreat for lunch offer a quiet window where the crew lowers



Top: the picturesque Dipalain Island in Cullion. Below: the 42.5-metre trimaran *Adastra* launched in 2012 by Chinese yacht builder McConaghy Boats. She is a regular visitor to the Philippines and particularly Palawan.

COURTESY OF LXV PHILIPPINES (3)

kayaks into the water, allowing guests to glide through the twin bodies of water separated by a narrow limestone wall.

The first day concludes at Barracuda Lake, locally known as Luluyuan. Named after skeletal remains found in its depths, the lake's real marvel lies beneath the surface. A rare thermocline, where layers of fresh and salt water meet, causes an unusual rise in temperature as divers descend. Whether you're a novice snorkeller or a seasoned diver, drifting past jagged limestone formations in this underworld feels like crossing into another dimension.

Quieter shores are dedicated to day three. The cruise heads to a relaxed island-hopping adventure in Culion, far from the busier, commercial beaches. The morning begins at Malcapuya Island, where guests can enjoy an early swim and soak up the sun beneath swaying palms, on a long, powdery stretch of white sand.

Then, the voyage moves forward to Ditaytayan Sandbar, a shape-shifting natural wonder that transforms with the tide. At low tide, the sand unfurls even farther into the sea, creating a walking path across the shallows. For those seeking a more secluded escape, the final destination is the untouched island of Calumbagan. Though the waters en route may be slightly rougher, the reward is a pristine, crowd-free paradise.

On day five, the focus shifts to pure exclusivity, as the voyage enters some of the private islands of Linapacan, accessible only through LXV's tours. Stops include the pristine shores of Dimanglet and Lacalaca Islands, along with a visit to a protected



ANJUAN GRESATI | PEXELS

turtle sanctuary on Ariara Island. With a bit of luck, guests might witness baby turtles hatching and making their first journey into the sea. After a day of exploration and wonder, the group gathers for a supper inspired by local flavors, with freshly caught seafood as the evening's highlight.

Though the cruises are unmistakably luxurious, Didier insists on staying grounded in the local culture. "I'm still selling the tradition, the people. I want to take guests to the fishermen - I want them to see the fishermen, to watch them negotiate," he said. The crew already knows to veer off course at the wave of a fisherman's hand, an invitation to come closer and see what's been pulled from the sea that morning.

In some instances, the tour includes a visit to a nearby fishing village of Calibang Island, where guests can catch a glimpse

of everyday life and even visit the local school to interact with the children. They may find themselves in the midst of an unscripted, authentic moment: ten dogs rushing to the shore, a fishing family waving them in with warm curiosity, fresh catch in hand. Guests often buy fish directly from the family, and as Didier described, "They want this simple [experience], they'll buy the barracuda and ten minutes later, it's on the grill." Meal is served on board, fresh from the fire, the salt still clinging to the skin of the fish.

As the journey comes to a close, a final detour leads through the quiet beauty of the Bacuit Archipelago in El Nido. At low tide, Snake Island reveals its signature S-shaped sandbar, which is ideal for a peaceful morning walk that feels like a stroll across the sea. A short hike to the hilltop offers a clear view of the winding shoreline

below. On Pinagbuyutan Island, guests can take a break under the coconut trees, relax in a hammock or enjoy the view of the island's striking towering limestone cliffs. As the day winds down, there's the chance for a refreshing dip in the shallow waters of Hidden Beach, a secluded cove tucked behind towering rock formations.

Surrounded by nature and bathed in the soft light of sunset, it's a quiet, beautiful way to close a journey through some of the region's most remarkable places.

In Palawan, the reward lies not only in the scenery, but in the stillness between destinations and the warmth of each encounter. These islands offer a rare kind of luxury, not only measured by extravagance, but by a sense of wonder and the feeling of being both completely removed and deeply connected. Long after the last island fades from view, that fleeting feeling remains. ●

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Bilgin’s *Camila*: A Symphony of Space and Style

The latest 50-metre vessel in the acclaimed Bilgin 163 series, M/Y *Camila*, emerges from Istanbul as a testament to collaborative design and bespoke craftsmanship. Following her delivery in May, this superyacht is set to make her grand debut at the 2025 Monaco Yacht Show.

The launch of a new superyacht is always a moment of celebration, but with *Camila*, Bilgin Yachts has orchestrated something truly special. The fourth vessel in the successful 50-metre Bilgin 163 series, she follows in the wake of her sister ships Snow 5, Starburst III, and Eternal Spark. Yet, *Camila* carves her own distinct identity, born from a remarkable synergy between the shipyard, her experienced owner, and a team of world-class designers. While *Camila* takes the spotlight in Monaco, her launch is part of a landmark year for the shipyard which also saw the delivery of her magnificent fleet mate, the 80-metre M/Y *Al Reem*. *Al Reem* is the much-anticipated and voluminous final sister in the shipyard’s landmark 80-metre trilogy, which launched at the end of 2024.

“*Camila* reflects the culmination of our dedication to excellence,” says İsmail Şengün, CEO of Bilgin Yachts. “We’re thrilled to deliver a vessel that truly represents the best of Bilgin Yachts.” This success was fostered through a seamless partnership with Unique Yacht Design, responsible for the naval architecture and a striking exterior, and the renowned Italian studio Hot Lab, which curated the yacht’s refined interiors.

An Exterior Defined by Volume and Flow

Unique Yacht Design’s primary philosophy for the Bilgin 163 platform was to create a vessel that feels intrinsically connected to the sea. *Camila* achieves this with a design that offers an astonishing 20% more exterior space than comparable 48-metre yachts, all without compromising her sleek, athletic profile.

“Our approach is centered on enhancing open-air living through thoughtfully arranged, spacious, and sheltered deck areas,” explains Emrecan Özgün, CEO of Unique Yacht Design. Key to this is a layout that boasts a 21-metre-long sundeck and a 12-metre-long bridge deck aft. These proportions create a harmonious relationship between the yacht and the sea, allowing guests to enjoy each level with comfort and ease, without adding visual weight to the yacht’s sleek and sporty profile.

An Interior of Sophisticated Serenity

Stepping inside, Hot Lab’s design narrative unfolds in an atmosphere of calm sophistication. The interior is a masterclass in texture and tone, blending modern aesthetics with a timeless, comfortable elegance. “The interior design effortlessly blends modern aesthetics with timeless style, creating spaces that are both inviting and visually stunning,” notes Enrico Lumini, Partner and Head of Design at Hot Lab.

The main saloon is a testament to this vision, featuring oversized, curved sofas and a soothing palette of natural woods, polished metals, and luxurious textiles. A palette of exquisite stones -including Travertine, Silky Georgette, and Calacatta Gold- is used throughout, yet blended so masterfully “as if they were part of a single piece,” says Lumini. Dominating the formal dining space is a striking chandelier, while a custom onyx table serves as a centerpiece of incredible craftsmanship. Perhaps the most dramatic feature is the lobby’s six-metre-high chandelier, composed of hundreds of individual glass leaves.

Camila accommodates up to 12 guests across six staterooms, each offering privacy and comfort. The full-beam owner’s suite is a sanctuary of tranquility, featuring expansive windows, a private study with panoramic views, and a harmonious blend of Eucalyptus wood, striped glass, and creamy carpets. And beneath her elegant lines, *Camila* is a formidable trans-oceanic explorer. Built with a steel hull and aluminium superstructure, the 499 GT yacht is powered by twin 1,450 hp Caterpillar C32 engines. She achieves a top speed of 16.5 knots and boasts an impressive range of approximately 5,000 nautical miles at a cruising speed of 12 knots, combining robust performance with the stability of a full-displacement hull.

The Grand Finale: The 80-Metre M/Y *Al Reem*

Marking the triumphant conclusion of its 80-metre series, Bilgin launched *Al Reem* at the end of 2024. Following in the footsteps of the revolutionary Tatiana and the award-winning Leona, *Al Reem* enhances the legacy of her predecessors with fresh innovations.

“While *Al Reem* is the youngest sister in this series, she is the most voluminous,” explains exterior designer Emrecan Özgün. Boasting a gross tonnage of 1,758 GT, her superstructure was completely redesigned to create “smooth, flowing lines and an imposing yet elegant profile”. Her mast is 20% larger than her sisterships’, and her aft decks have been extended to provide 20% more outdoor living space.

For the interiors, Bilgin again partnered with H2 Yacht Design. “We developed a completely new interior aesthetic for *Al Reem*, focusing on a light and neutral palette that feels fresh yet calming on the soul,” says Jonny Horsfield, founder of H2 Yacht Design. The design blends warm, organic matt timbers with the sleek refinement of polished stainless steel, plush cream leather, and soft silk carpets.

The owner’s vision was to create a “serene oasis focused on calmness, purity, and relaxation”. This was translated through modern aesthetics and an open layout that encourages a connection with nature. Marino Perkusic, representing the owner, praised the shipyard’s execution: “Their creativity and attention to detail exceeded all expectations, translating the owner’s vision into a breathtaking reality.” *Al Reem* accommodates 12 guests who are tended to by 24 crew members.

As Bilgin Yachts looks ahead, with 14 new yachts in build -including seven of the new 52-metre Bilgin 170 series, a 74-meter and an 86-meter yachts- *Camila* stands as a powerful statement of intent. She is not merely a new vessel but a showcase of the shipyard’s forward-thinking approach and its mastery in translating an owner’s vision into a stunning reality.●



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Building on a Legacy

Filip and Luka Jakir share the story of building the 53m charter yacht *Maia*, how their family have inspired their business and the plans for the future. By **Francesca Webster**.



Brothers Filip and Luka Jakir, continuing their family's dream of yacht construction with the build of *Maia*.



SuperYacht Times sat down with brothers Filip and Luka Jakir, the driving force behind the newly launched 53-metre superyacht *Maia*, built entirely in Croatia. With the vessel now active on the charter market, Filip and Luka share how their family's seafaring heritage shaped every detail of this deeply personal project – and why *Maia* is already capturing repeat clients in her debut season.

"The sea is very much in our blood," says Luka. "One of our relatives even traced our family's maritime roots back eight generations." Their grandfather Filip was the first in their immediate line to become a captain and shipowner, followed by their father Josip, who has built or rebuilt over a dozen vessels. Filip and Luka were raised on their father's beloved wooden ship *Vruja*, where they learned seamanship from a young age, with Filip becoming a captain at eighteen and Luka soon after. Today, Filip captains *Maia* while Luka continues to helm their 31-metre gulet, *Tajna Mora*.

For Filip, *Maia* is more than a business venture – it is a personal legacy. "I don't consider myself a businessman. I wanted to build just this one yacht that I would be truly proud of, something that honours all those before us who sacrificed so that we could build what we did," he shares.

Filip initially envisioned building a tall ship, developing plans up to seventy percent before COVID halted the project. The pandemic's economic impact made a tall ship unfeasible, but the family's commitment to creating a vessel that reflected their passion remained unchanged. "It wasn't easy. I struggled for a year on whether to start, and we sold everything we could to gather the funds. It was a risky decision, but one that felt true to our values," Filip explains.

The family's shared love for classic yachts guided the aesthetic, while Luka's appreciation for modern comforts ensured *Maia* would meet contemporary charter expectations. "Our father admired the understated elegance of classic yachts, and we felt the heritage green hull captured this perfectly," Luka notes. Filip adds, "Initially, the plan was blue, but my father suggested green, and when I saw the concept drawings I knew it was the right choice."

The exterior was designed by Croatian naval architect Ivica Sarun in collaboration with Filip, who personally contributed technical drawings. Inspiration was drawn from the classic gentleman's style yachts of the 1920s and 30s with their classic lines and elegant profiles.

Maia's build may have been a family endeavour, but she is also a thoroughly capable vessel. "We have done more than 1,500 nautical miles in the last twenty days, and I am still astonished at how seaworthy she is," Filip says. The yacht's classical shape and deeper, carefully contoured hull deliver excellent stability, even in challenging conditions. "While a neighbouring modern yacht was rolling heavily, *Maia* remained steady."

Efficiency was a priority, with *Maia* achieving a comfortable cruising speed of eleven knots while consuming just seventy litres per hour across both engines, keeping APA at approximately twenty-five percent. The yacht can achieve a top speed of nearly fourteen knots and boasts a range of up to seven to eight thousand nautical miles, making her ready for long-range exploration.

With eight charters secured in her first season, the brothers' cautious optimism has turned into genuine pride. "We're already at the goal we set, with the





potential for another one or two charters this season,” Filip notes. For Filip, the true differentiator is not only Maia’s distinctive design but the crew. “Seventy to eighty percent of how successful a charter is comes down to the crew. *Maia* could be the best vessel in the world, but without the right crew, it wouldn’t matter,” he says. Recent guests have already rebooked for additional voyages, captivated by the yacht’s warmth, wooden details and classic charm that subtly stands out in port. Luka echoes this sentiment: “We’re not just operators – we’re hosts. Our approach is warm, consistent, and detail-focused, rooted in genuine care. Guests feel the difference when the people behind the yacht are actively involved.”

While the family hopes to charter *Maia* in the Caribbean or Seychelles in the future, this winter will focus on refining the yacht’s details. “There are many small elements I want to perfect, even if guests wouldn’t notice them, because I see them,” Filip says. Asked if they would consider selling *Maia* should a client wish to purchase her, Filip is clear: “I wouldn’t say she’s for sale. Even if I could build another one for free, I wouldn’t. *Maia* is the only one. She has her imperfections, but that’s part of what gives her heart.” Filip also reflects on the often unseen

strength of the women in their family, whose support shaped the family’s maritime journey. “As much as my father and grandfather did, nothing would have been possible without their wives beside them. My mother and grandmother were there through every sacrifice, every storm. When we started from Split to Athens, we stopped for an hour in my hometown, Makarska, and the family came to greet us. Seeing my grandmother, eighty-six, climb on board in tears and telling me how proud my grandfather would be – that meant more than anything else in the world. That moment is the reason for the build. *Maia* is an ode to that legacy.”

The brothers work closely with Otium Yachts, their central agent, in collaboration with CharterWorld, ensuring clients receive a seamless experience reflective of the family’s values and commitment.

Looking ahead, Filip and Luka’s focus remains on building a loyal charter clientele who return year after year, ensuring *Maia*’s journey continues with the same warmth and authenticity with which she was built.

“*Maia* represents our family’s legacy and vision, brought to life with passion and precision,” Luka reflects. “We hope to continue evolving and delivering an experience that feels genuine, warm, and unforgettable – wherever *Maia* sails next.”



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From Circumnavigation to Corinthian Celebration

Ilia Rigas shares the story of her life aboard the Perini Navi sailing yacht *Almyra II* and the origin of the Cyclades Cup Regatta.
By **Francesca Webster**.

The dream is ongoing. We had more yachts than anticipated and the most important part was seeing owners and their guests really connect, exchanging stories and building friendships.

When Ilia Rigas and her husband set their sights on a Perini Navi, they were not simply acquiring a yacht – they were building the next chapter of a seaborne life deeply rooted in Greek maritime tradition. Today, aboard the 49.8-metre sailing yacht *Almyra II*, Ilia not only navigates the open oceans, but also the social seas of the sailing world, leading the charge with a highlight on the regatta calendar: the Cyclades Cup.

A dream called *Almyra II*

For over two decades, Ilia and her husband cruised Greek waters on a smaller motor sailer also named *Almyra*, a vessel so intrinsic to their identity that friends now associate the couple with the very “salt of the sea” – the Greek meaning of *Almyra*. Their decision to acquire a Perini Navi yacht stemmed from an ambition to pursue a full circumnavigation, something their previous yacht was not suited for.

The path to ownership was anything but simple. “It took three years,” Ilia recalls, after spotting the yacht – then called *Ariane* – in a magazine. Originally confiscated by a bank, the acquisition required navigating legal and bureaucratic complexities before eventually winning her in a nail-biting online auction. A rival bidder even attempted to buy the yacht post-auction after an apparent internet glitch cost him the sale. “He offered more money,” she says, “but I told him, ‘I’m sorry. We won the boat.’”

Their intention for *Almyra II* was clear: a full circumnavigation. To prepare, they overhauled the yacht and, by September, committed fully to the plan. “We told our crew: we’re going. And within two months, we set off.”

The refit and preparation for their long voyage were intensive but exhilarating. In a matter of months, the couple departed Greece, setting course across the Atlantic. “I did the crossing twice – once with my husband and daughter and once solo,” she explains. “And the solo return was even more magical. No responsibilities – just me and the sea.”



STUDIO ILLUME (2)

A family voyage of discovery

The journey took the family across the Atlantic, charting a course through the Caribbean and beyond. They called at islands from St. Barth’s down to the Grenadines, immersing themselves in cruising life. “We weren’t just passing through,” Ilia explains. “We were living it. Six months onboard, embracing the lifestyle fully.”

The crossings were pivotal moments. The first transatlantic leg was shared with her husband and daughter, but the return voyage Ilia undertook solo. “Coming back alone was a revelation. It was even more magical. No responsibilities for others – just me, the yacht and the ocean. I felt free, in a way I hadn’t before.”

The journey was transformative, shifting Ilia’s worldview. “As Greeks, we usually cruise in familiar waters. This was a mindset change. We decided to do something most Greeks don’t – and it was liberating.”



The birth of the Cyclades Cup

It was during their Caribbean sojourn, while participating in their first regatta in St. Barth's, that Ilia was struck by inspiration. "We loved the energy – racing by day, relaxing in the afternoon and sharing dinners with fascinating people. We thought, why not recreate this in Greece?"

From that seed of an idea came the Cyclades Cup – a spirited, Corinthian-style event now gaining momentum in the regatta calendar. "We started with just a few calls to friends and it blossomed," she explains. The inaugural edition welcomed twelve yachts. In its second year, that number soared to twenty-one.

Now, following the latest edition, Ilia reflects with clear pride: "It was even better than I was expecting. The dream is ongoing. We had more yachts than anticipated and the most important part was seeing owners and their guests really connect, exchanging stories and building friendships. It is not always easy being both organiser and participant, but we managed to keep old friendships while making new ones."

International owners also joined, including the owners of the brand new Wally sailing yacht *Galma*, who were captivated by the event's warm, owner-led spirit. "The owner took the microphone and said, 'This has been phenomenal. I'm coming back!' Reactions like that really show us that we are creating an event with the right soul."

Greek hospitality at its core

This year, the regatta expanded its community initiatives, collaborating with Cycladic Identity, part of the Museum of Cycladic Art, to preserve local heritage. "We don't want to lose our identity as Greeks, as Cyclades, as small islands like Antiparos," Ilia says. Guests were invited on a rare private tour of the restored Antiparos Castle with local archaeologists – a moment that merged culture with community. "We want to bring more initiatives that go beyond racing, supporting the culture of the islands while aiding the local school and sailing club," she adds.

The sailing conditions were equally memorable, with strong winds on the final day adding to the excitement. "We did not sail our best – we came third alongside Labelle and perhaps *Almyra* // wasn't as clean underneath as she should have been," she laughs, "but it was still about the joy of the race, the energy and the spirit."



STUDIO ILLUME (3)



Looking ahead

As *Almyra II* continues to be the family's faithful companion, Ilia is clear about her current focus. "We want *Almyra* to remain part of the story as we build towards the next Cyclades Cup. We want the right yachts and the right owners who bring energy and who truly live the event, not just be seen."

With her vision of attracting more international superyachts to Greek waters, Ilia acknowledges the challenge of spreading the word: "We are a startup and it takes time, but with the right partners and the owners who have experienced the event wanting to return, we are building something real."

And while the dream of Antarctica is still on the horizon for her husband, for now, Ilia's sights are firmly set on growing the Cyclades Cup while preserving its authenticity. "This regatta is our adventure," she says. "It gives us purpose, joy and a way to give back. Antarctica will wait."

With the Cyclades Cup proving that family, authenticity and Greek hospitality still have a place in modern yachting, Ilia Riga has not only created a remarkable event – she has brought heart back into Corinthian racing. ●

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Anchored in Sardinia is Benetti 49.9m *Asani*, by Monty Viant



74m Amels superyacht *Sixth Sense* spotted in Florida, by Rui Santos



105m Oceanco superyacht *H3* in Juan-les-Pins, by Lidija Jakovljevic / @superyachtsfromabove



Perini Navi's 56-metre sailing yacht *Roseheart*, anchored in Marmaris, Turkey, by Trevor Lowe



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