

A CHARTER YACHT OWNER'S PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

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RITES
OF
PASSAGE



*Refreshingly straightforward and seaworthy,
Stella di Mare is a 130-foot cruiser designed
for serious exploring.*

BY
JUSTIN
RATCLIFFE

LET'S FACE IT:

Most so-called explorer yachts are used more for show than for serious seafaring. This is emphatically not the case with CBI Navi's *Stella di Mare*. At 130 feet (39.7 meters) in length overall, she is a purposeful passagemaker tailored to the exacting requirements of her Italian owners for year-round, long-range cruising.

"Our intention was to create a connection between three family generations, starting from the first of 75 years old to the last of 7 years old," says the senior owner's son. "We wanted a yacht of substance and real value, not just a fashion statement or status symbol."

The family brought experience to the project, having previously owned a Cantiere delle Marche Darwin 96. At first glance, the two explorers look broadly similar. Both have exterior design and naval architecture by HydroTec, and they share the same dark blue and white paintwork. But because the owners spend as much as four months on board each year, they needed the living space and stowage that the 430-gross-ton *Stella di Mare* provides (she has almost twice the interior volume as the 96).

With a cruise to the Arctic Circle on their wish list, they also wanted a custom yacht adapted to colder climates that could be autonomous for weeks at a time.

"The input from the owners touched not only on the aesthetics, but also the practical use and behavior of the yacht," says HydroTec principal Sergio Cutolo. "One of the main points was that she had to be a real explorer vessel."

Computational fluid dynamics and tank testing were used to design a round-bilge hull form with a bulbous bow that focuses on seakeeping and fuel economy. To further enhance efficiency, provisions were taken to optimize the beam/draft ratio and allow for high diameter propellers.

At a cruising speed of 10.5 knots, the yacht's Caterpillar engines burn just 14.5 gallons per hour for an effective range of 7,000 nautical

miles, according to the builder. Her flared bow provides the traditional good looks that her owners desired, but also keeps the deck dry in rough seas. Based on his years of experience as a merchant mariner, the owners' captain specified heavy-duty winches, cleats, bollards and other deck gear.

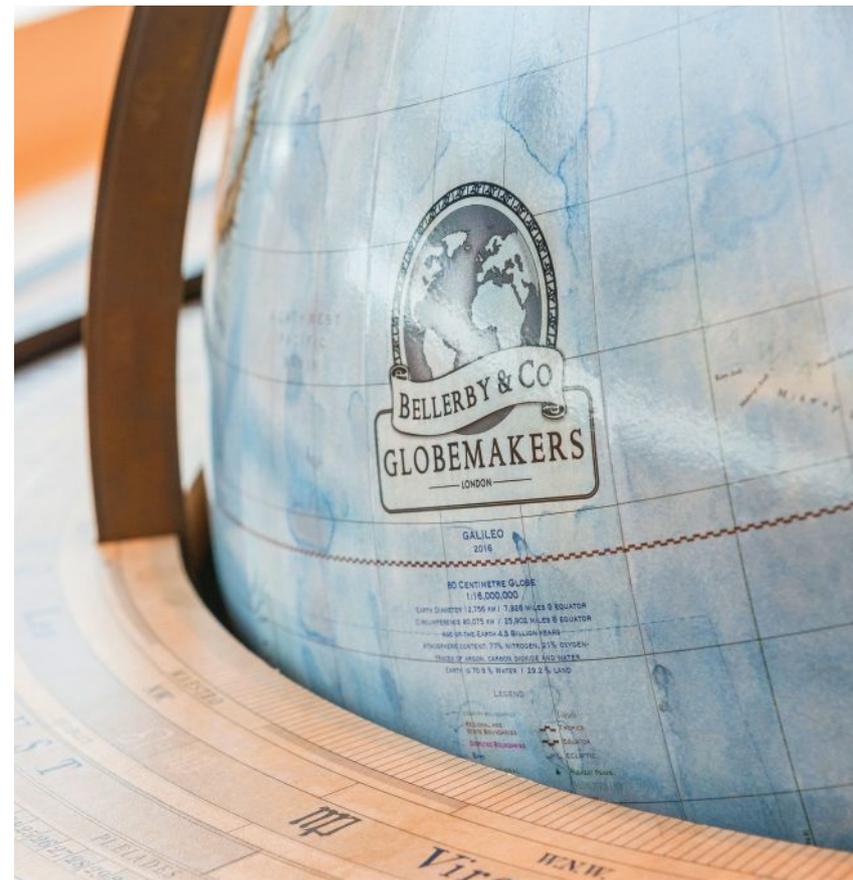
While HydroTec was working on the technical specifications and exterior styling, Fossati Design Bureau began developing the interior concept. Studio head Umberto Fossati had consulted on the interior of *Galileo G*, the 183-foot (55.7-meter) Perini Navi Vitruvius explorer that has circumnavigated the globe twice and transited the Northwest Passage. The owners of *Stella di Mare* liked her low-key, yet refined décor, which provided the starting point for their own yacht.

"The family wanted something classic and timeless that was also fresh and elegant," Fossati says. "So, we selected warm walnut for the joinery, cut variously to expose the flame pattern and densely striped grain, and tinted cherry with wenge inserts for the sole. Walnut tends to mature and darken over time, and we took this into account when specifying the soft furnishings and accessories."

Construction got underway at Mondomarine in Savona, Italy, in early 2015, but the project stalled when the shipyard ran into financial difficulties. The unfinished yacht was relocated to CBI Navi in Viareggio. Taking over a half-completed project is never a straightforward task, but the Tuscan yard and interior outfitters Sealine completed the custom build in nine months, in time for last summer's season in the Mediterranean. During a maiden cruise of Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily lasting more than a month, the yacht proved her autonomy by spending just four days in port.

"When the family disembarked, they told me they felt completely at home, as if they had owned the yacht for years," Fossati says, with the air of mission accomplished.





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The sundeck has a fitness corner under the hardtop; The full-beam master suite; The pro-spec galley and breakfast room beyond; A detail of the globe by Bellerby & Co. in the family lounge; Pullmans in the twin-berth staterooms mean the yacht can sleep 14 on private cruises; Alfresco dining on the main deck aft. FACING PAGE: The entrance to the main salon. Note the overhead paneling that echoes the cherry wood sole.



Stella di Mare is certified for 12 guests, but can carry 14 for private cruises in a master suite on the main deck forward and in four staterooms on the lower deck. The master includes a private office, as on long cruises the senior owner's son rises early to deal with business matters.

Pullmans provide the extra berths in the twin staterooms, which include a children's room with bunk beds and a bulkhead decorated with a mural of cartoon characters. With out-of-season use in mind, all the bathrooms are fitted with radiators.

The family has avoided anything that might be labeled flashy. For example, they eschewed marble in the bathrooms and day heads in favor of a lightweight, laminated porcelain called Kerlite, which is cool to the touch, like stone. All the veneers have a satin finish, and the only metal detailing is a hint of brushed bronze to "lift" the dark-wood joinery and custom-tinted leather from Royal Leather.

A few furnishings, such as the Poltrona Frau leather armchairs in the main salon, were carried over from the previous yacht, but most were newly sourced or custom built. Bespoke pieces include the wenge and bronze dining table designed by Fossati, and a circular, hand-painted map of the world by Bellerby & Co. on the dining room bulkhead. A globe by the same London-based firm of artisans is recessed into the cabinet joinery in the sky lounge. Antique Venetian prints from the owners' collection appear elsewhere on board.

The owners chose manual lighting controls over the domotic systems usually found on today's yachts (although the wiring and rack space for full automation were designed into the yacht, in case of resale). Nor did they want people cooped up in their staterooms watching television, so there are only three TVs on board: one in the master suite, one in the crew mess and a giant curved screen in the sky lounge for all the family.

A specific request was the dinette next to the galley, for informal breakfasts or a quick sandwich at lunchtime. The pro-spec galley is equipped with high-capacity fridge/freezers, and there are more on the under-deck—another rarity on a 130-footer—along with a refrigerated garbage store. As a family of wine connoisseurs, the owners requested stowage for as many as 800 bottles.

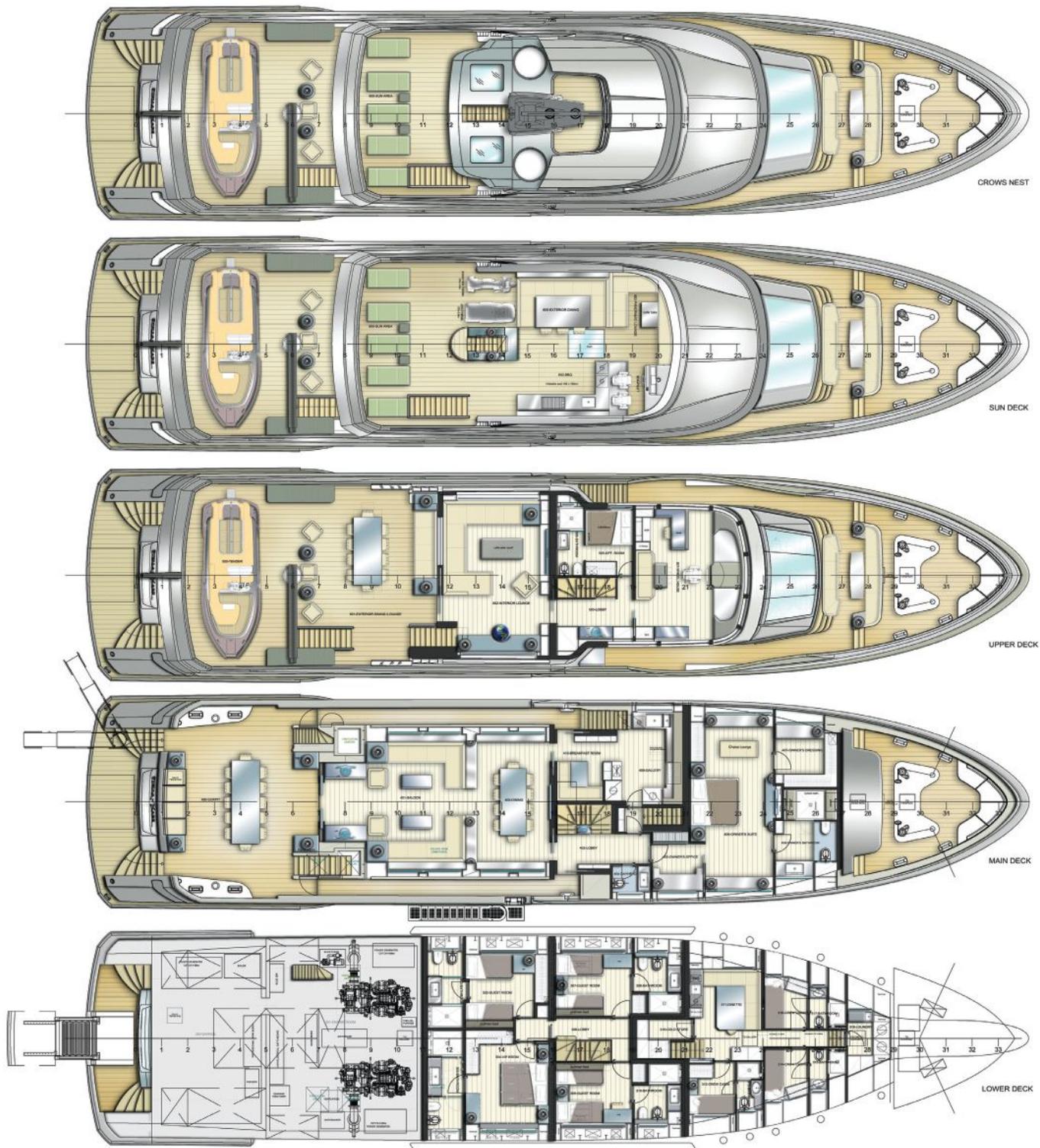
All three decks feature shaded exterior dining, and the flybridge deck has a barbecue area abaft the helm station. A skylight is set into the deck to illuminate the stairwell below, and a couple of exercise machines are tucked under the hardtop's overhang aft. Perched atop the hardtop in front of the radar mast is a small "crow's nest" observation deck.

On the foredeck is a four-person sunpad on top of the



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CBI NAVI STELLA DI MARE

LOA: 130ft. 2in. (39.67m)
BEAM: 28ft. 3in. (8.6m)
DRAFT: 8ft. 10in. (2.7m)
CONSTRUCTION: steel/aluminum
DISPLACEMENT: 490 tons
GROSS TONNAGE: 430
ENGINES: 2 x 1,000-hp Caterpillar C32 Acert

GENERATORS: 3 x Caterpillar C4.4
FUEL: 19,812 gal. (75,000L)
WATER: 2,113 gal. (8,000L)
SPEED: 15 knots (max.); 10.5 knots (cruise)
RANGE: 7,000 nm
STABILIZERS: CMC electric
CLASSIFICATION: LY3 MCA compliance

NAVAL ARCHITECTURE: HydroTec
EXTERIOR STYLING: HydroTec
INTERIOR STYLING: Fossati Design Bureau
GUESTS: 12-14
CREW: 7-8
BUILDER: CBI Navi
YEAR: 2018

rescue tender bay, and a seating area that is safely separate from the mooring station in the bow.

The 24-foot (7.3-meter) guest tender, custom-built to mirror the mothership's styling, is stowed on the upper deck aft with a central crane to launch it from port or starboard. This solution frees up space for a large lazarette with room for a workbench and water toys, which range from paddleboards to a Laser and an Optimist dinghy.

The wheelhouse is generous for the size of yacht with a separate chart/radio desk and is fitted out to the same quality standard as the guest areas, as is the adjoining captain's cabin.

Equally as important for long-range cruising is the fully ventilated laundry on the lower deck forward, with two washing machines and dryers. The space is roomy enough for ironing without occupying the crew corridor.

Although the owners' ultimate aim is to cruise the high Arctic latitudes with *Stella di Mare*, they are preparing for the voyage one step at a time. Next year, they plan to cross the Atlantic to the Caribbean and continue on to explore Polynesia and New Zealand. Only after they and their crew are thoroughly familiar with the yacht will they tackle the Far North.

In the meantime, they are already toying with the idea of a building a bigger boat, perhaps up to 180 feet (55 meters) in length. Once again, it would be "a yacht of substance" for exploring the corners of the globe.

"We want to continue to grow and develop our yachting experience," says the senior owner's son. "I'm still not entirely sure what we enjoy most: the actual cruising or the whole design and construction process. Both provide intense satisfaction and push us to start anew each time we finish a project." **Y**

For more information: cbinavi.com



ABOVE: Detail of the custom tender designed to mirror the classic styling of the mothership. BELOW: The wheelhouse is practical, spacious and tastefully finished to the same high standard as the guest areas.

