



A Captain's Story: Olav's Daze



Olav Hinke arrived at the Hakvoort yard in 2001 to oversee the construction of the 46-metre *Flamingo Daze*. He immediately felt quite at home, having lived in Holland on two previous occasions for major superyacht projects. And this latest assignment was to confirm Olav's opinion that there's no better place to build a boat than in Europe's Yacht Valley. ►



// Dutch craftsmen take great pride in their work //

By his own admission Olav Hinke got into boating quite by accident, and originally just saw it as a way to experience new things and travel the world. Now, after over two decades in the industry, yachting is very much the career of a man who has had a remarkable relationship with Dutch boats.

Born and raised in Mexico City, Olav moved to Miami in 1978, at the age of 15. He finished high school and started his university studies there. It was during this latter period that a unique opportunity came his way. "I had a summer job working at a marina and was asked by the owner of a 70-foot sports fisherman to take the helm for a day," Olav reminisces. "We got lucky and caught loads of fish that day, and the owner then asked me to work as captain, which I did for six months."

Awesome boats

Having developed a passion for the sea, Olav subsequently became deck hand on *Highlander V* and sailed around the entire Pacific Rim on a seven-month, 32,000-mile expedition. "This was a fantastic start and really gave me a taste for global travel," he says. After two years on *Highlander V*, Olav was invited in 1989 to participate in the construction as second Engineer/Mate of another Feadship then under construction, *Mi Gaea*. Thus began his first visit to Holland.

"I was second engineer on this project at Feadship's De Vries yard in Aalsmeer," Olav recalls. "I was responsible for setting up all the onboard tools as well as the owner's toys. These included his and hers Harley Davidson motorcycles, which were hydraulically lifted out of a hidden storage space on the aft deck. This awesome yacht made me realise at an early stage the incredible level of innovation available at Dutch yards."

This eight-month stint was followed by several enjoyable years on the finished product. In 1993, Olav returned to Holland to take part in yet another Feadship project, this time at the Van Lent yard, where he contributed to the construction of the *Enterprise V* as first officer. A refit project in Fort Lauderdale followed, and then a three-year job running *Mit Sea Ah*, a 34.75-metre Directors/Sparkman Stevens yacht. After that, Olav became captain of the 40.23-metre *Halcyon*, a job he would keep for five years. This boat was originally launched from the De Vries yard in 1982 under the name *Synthesis*.

The right place

"I would have stayed on *Halcyon* for even longer if this excellent opportunity with *Flamingo Daze* had

not arisen," says Olav of his latest project. "Now I expect to stay on here for a long time. In this industry, a great deal revolves about timing and being in the right place in the right time. An important lesson I have learnt is to persevere and see things through rather than constantly move from boat to boat. That way you gain time and space for genuine opportunities to come about."

"The turnover in the yachting industry is much too high – all too often, people think that the grass is greener on the other side. While I recognise that I've been fortunate with owners, it is important that crew members at all levels also play their part when it comes to improving crew continuity."

Head start

Built by the Hakvoort Shipyard in Monnickendam, *Flamingo Daze* was delivered in February 2004. "I've spent almost three years here for this project and I feel that it's been fun and very interesting," Olav says. "I was here well before the actual building began so as to get a head start in terms of design and engineering."

Why such a long stay? "The owner's decision to get me started at such an early stage reflects his meticulous approach and my preference to be fully involved. I got the opportunity

