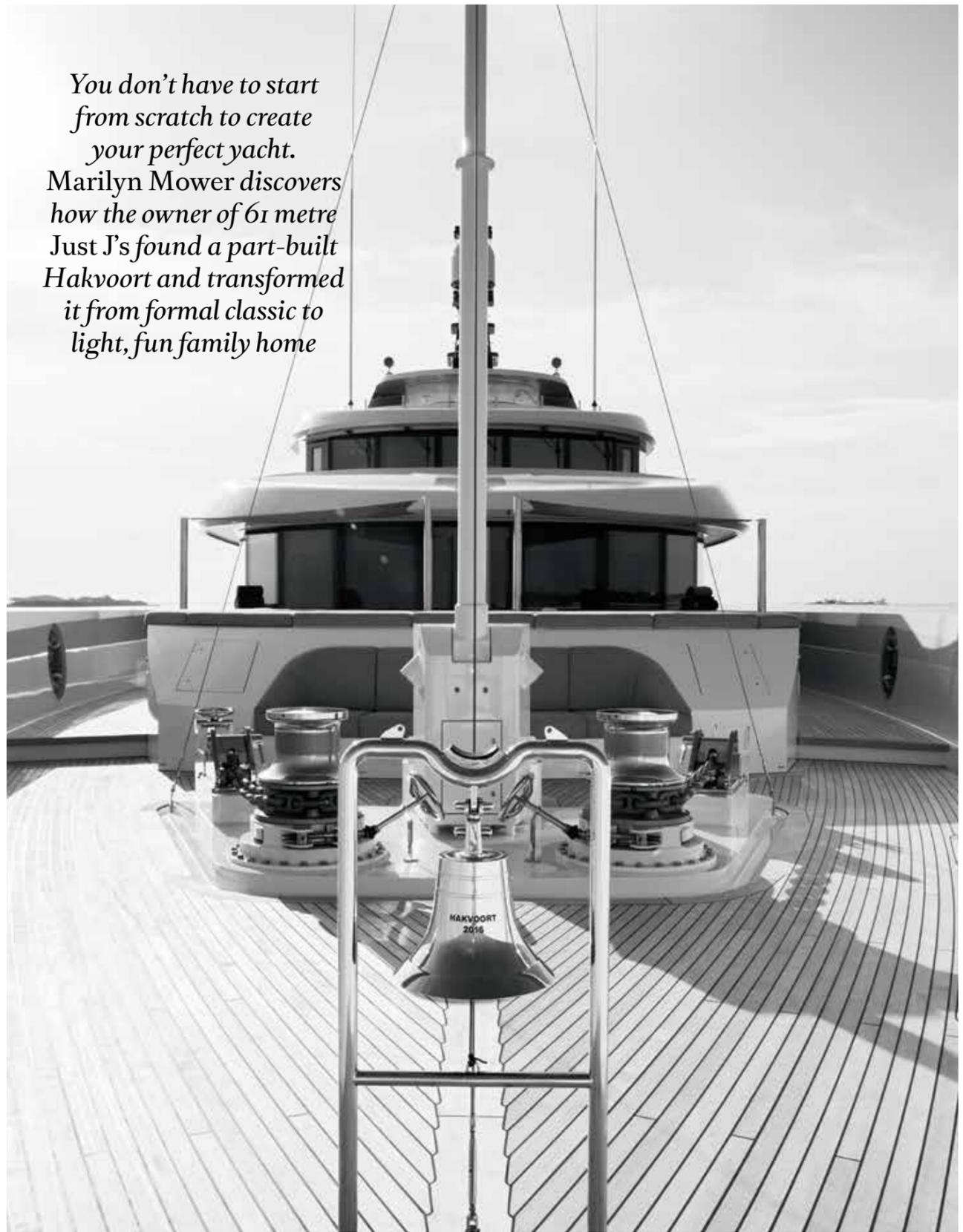




**A L L
C H A N G E,
P L E A S E**

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You don't have to start from scratch to create your perfect yacht. Marilyn Mower discovers how the owner of 61 metre Just J's found a part-built Hakvoort and transformed it from formal classic to light, fun family home



An American superyacht owner had spent a year looking for the right boat – before he discovered that someone else had already started building it. What followed was a story of fate, faith and circumstances that resulted in Hakvoort's largest ever project – the 61 metre, five-deck *Just J's*.

Today, sitting in the cool, soothing ambience of her saloon, *Just J's* looks a completely different boat to the one whose first contract was signed in July 2012. Or indeed from when the second contract was signed in February 2015.

"It's an interesting story," says yard director Klaas Hakvoort. In the winter of 2011-2012 Hakvoort, the family-owned yard in the small town of Monnickendam in the Netherlands, was expanding its main shed to 65 metres, upgrading its power supply and had just converted a neighbouring property into workshops for larger vessels. It was looking for a customer.

Fort Lauderdale-based broker Rob Moran contacted Sander Sinot of the eponymous design company and, with the yard, they began working on a 55 metre concept, including pricing, for a Russian client of Moran's. "It was clear from day one that this would be the next generation Hakvoort," says Sinot's lead designer on the project, Paul Costerus. "It was to be a contemporary profile with lots of windows. We made a rough GA with the yard and developed a preliminary profile, the design concept and a rendering for the owner's lounge."

Hakvoort recalls: "The client arrived at 6.30 one morning to have a look at the yard. At 10.30 we went inside to see the plans. He looked at them for half an hour and asked: 'How big can you go?' I told him 60 metres. He said: 'Sixty is not a good number for me. How about 61? I want a price before I leave at noon.' By 11.45 we had an understanding of where we would use the extra six metres and we had a price. We agreed on it and at 12.15 he left with a signed contract. For months we had been sitting with an empty hall. It was like a gift from heaven."

With Sinot's lengthened profile and an interior that accommodated two more guest cabins, the yard set to work. By spring 2014, Project Golden Age was already sporting her elaborate dark-wood joinery embellished with gold. Then Russia's economy fell into crisis and progress payments slowed. "He was a gentleman and continued to pay as he could to avoid foreclosure," says Hakvoort. "It helped us keep the lights on, but at the end of the year we stopped."

That was just half of it. A second yacht, a 64 metre, had been signed. Her owner, too, was in financial difficulty. "In six weeks, we went from €110 million in orders to €90 million in cancelled contracts," says Hakvoort. "You can imagine how stressful that was."

But Moran stepped in to help. "We shared the project with 40 of our clients and seven of them wanted to make offers," he says. In January 2015, Moran returned to the yard with a ray of hope: a knowledgeable American customer looking for a contemporary yacht he could have in short order. He sent his captain to evaluate the project. Within a week, the yard and Sinot showed how they could modify the interior without gutting it, the yard agreed to finish the boat in a year and a new ►



Right: because the new owner wanted a private deck there is now a spacious saloon with outdoor area aft



There are seven guest cabins, one a main deck VIP, above. Each has its own accent colour. The

circular glass lift, right, is a dramatic feature. The lift shaft was built outside the boat and lowered into place



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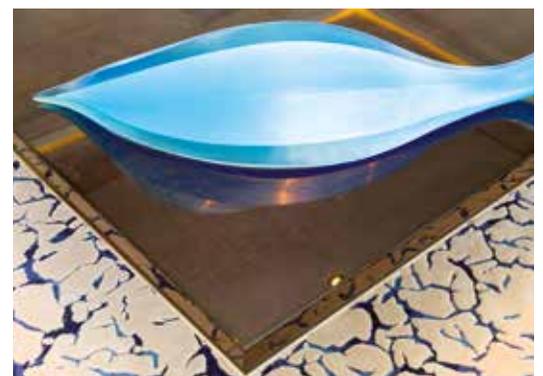


Right: Sinot made major changes to the owner's suite, introducing a stunning skylight dome over the bed



Above: custom rugs, such as the one in the upper deck saloon, enhance the new owner's desire for a

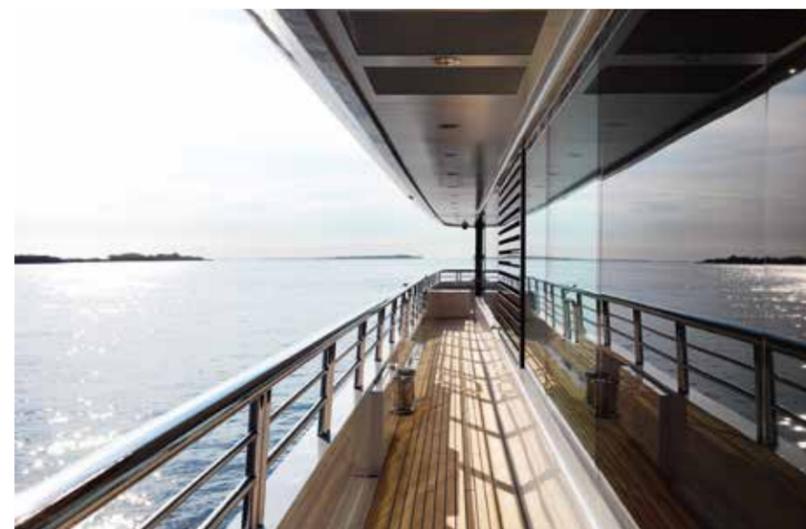
beach-house theme. The 100 per cent New Zealand wool rugs are made in the Netherlands by Jan Willard





Comfortable seats and a bar shaded by the support arch add to the considerable pleasures of the sun deck,

where there is a large countercurrent pool with glass sides and a ceramic border with sea motifs



“We had been looking for a new boat for a year. When I saw the volume this boat presented I thought it was a fantastic opportunity”

deal was struck. “Sinot did a fantastic job of sizing up the new owners,” says Captain Eric Edscorn, who is on his third boat with them. “We had been looking for a new boat for a year. They knew what they wanted. When I saw the volume this boat presented – it’s like a 68 metre – I thought it was a fantastic opportunity.”

Soon Edscorn was at the yard full time, organising the changes and fit-out as the owner’s representative. By February the carpenters at Hakvoort were giving the boat a vastly different personality. “The American owner wanted a more beach-house theme,” says Costerus. “Our new design covers much of the dark wood with paint or upholstery, using the dark wood now as an accent.” The studio also worked out a new colour palette for the interior, co-ordinating the indoor and exterior spaces and developing a hierarchy of finishes based on comfort and use. The master cabin, for example, has pure silk wall coverings whereas the hallways are the same colour, but the fabric panels are linen.

Just J’s is strictly for private use and the family sees her as a place to get together and have fun, which explains the bright colours and casual furniture. Edscorn ticked off a few of the major changes, starting with eliminating the varnished teak cap rail and replacing it with stainless steel. Exterior seating areas were modified and awnings added for shade. On the sun deck, a small pool was removed and replaced with a much larger countercurrent version sporting custom mosaic tiles and a ceramic sea-themed border – including a little crab clutching a “J” in its claws. This bit of whimsy complements the bold purple cushions and pillows to create a fun chill-out space.

Below, the area aft of the bridge is a cinema room with a 2.4 metre screen. Originally, it was a party room with gloss walnut joinery, gold and green columns and gold fixtures framing a dance floor. Now the floor is whitewashed oak, while mirrors on the tray ceiling have been exchanged for oak squares. The columns are wrapped in white leather with a Macassar ring peeking through at the top. The outdoor lounge aft has bright aqua accents to make a connection to the sea, says Costerus, while on the aft main deck below, the colour scheme is a more formal blue and silver.

This deck carries the most noticeable transformation to the beach-house look. The saloon is a massive open space with a seating area, a transition area for games or cards and a 14-seat dining area before the foyer. Foyers, actually. The centre of circulation – wide stairs wrapping around a glass lift – has a suitable landing area, but the main entrance from the side deck is a separate and ample lobby further forward, with a water jet-cut inlaid marble floor. This lobby and the VIP suite, which creates an odd number of cabins on this deck, allowed Sinot to make a bend in the passageway forward to the cabins to avoid the all-too-familiar bowling alley view from the saloon. It creates more privacy and the turn is the perfect spot for a self-service bar for the guests.

The lift is an epic feat of construction: it involved a solid central lift shaft that had to be built outside the boat and then lowered into the column. Hakvoort built up to that step, removed the shed’s roof, lowered the lift shaft into place with a crane and then buttoned up the roof again, explains the yard’s project manager Marc van Ditshuizen. On the aft main deck, a sliding hatch leads to a gym below that replaces a steam room. The tender garage has been modified to serve as an extra recreation space. “We don’t need two huge tenders because we travel in tandem with our fishing boat and dayboat,” says Edscorn. With the jet skis in the water or off to the side, the opening shell doors create a “beach”, which the crew set up with inflatable sofas.

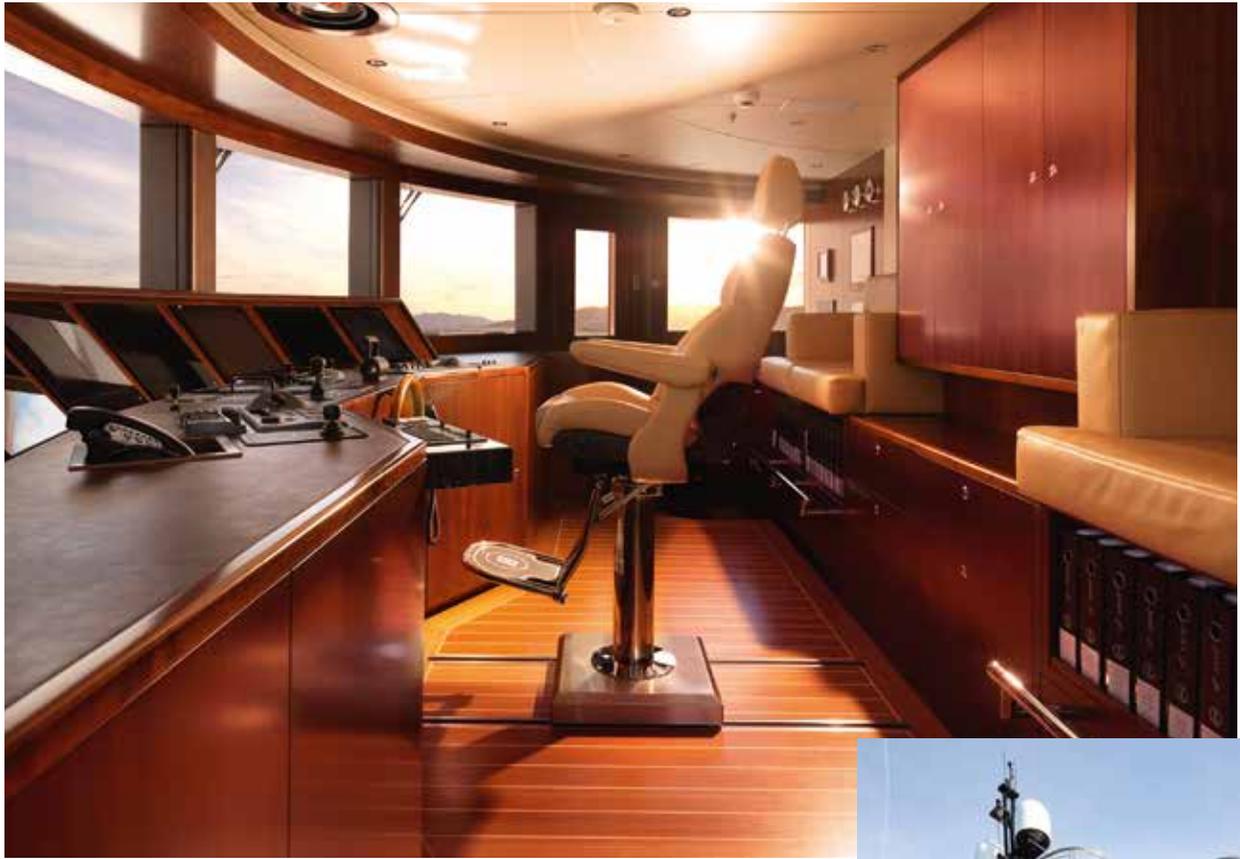
In terms of accommodation, each of the guest suites has a neutral background with its own accent colour – orange, purple, light blue, navy blue and beige. The two cabins, a twin and a double, on the lower deck can be organised as a family suite or the twin can be used by nannies. The owner’s deck is a true retreat and, according to Edscorn, the site of the most elaborate changes. “An owner’s deck was the extra thing they were looking for,” he says. With cupboards and the bed along the wall, the room felt too big. So Sinot flipped the layout, floating the bed under a stunning skylight dome. There are now his and hers dressing rooms en route to his and hers en suites and a separate study.

A side door leads out to a private deck area forward, a spa pool and sunpads. With the superstructure stepping aft sharply, this owner area is invisible from the bridge or sun deck. The outdoor area aft of the owner’s sitting room is the primary spot for alfresco dining. And it’s on this deck that the windows are the stars of the design. Rather than have the glass walls terminate into posts at the back corners of the room, the glass simply curves around the corner. These huge panels weigh 159kg each and are the most complicated of the 120 glass panels on the boat.

Behind the scenes, the boat’s circulation for crew creates a nice trunk for the dumb waiter and a clever spot on the lower and main decks for unobtrusive doors that allow the housekeeping crew to pop into the guest corridors to freshen the cabins. “The five decks allow us to do some great things,” says Costerus, “such as put the big crew mess and laundry on the tank deck, keeping that noise away from the crew cabins on the deck above, and the crew cabins are larger as a result.”

Just J’s won’t suffer from a lack of storage space. “That happened because of the extra deck,” says Hakvoort. “We moved the owner up and then there was room for five guest cabins on the main deck. Their views are absolutely great. All the new enquiries are asking for that. Technically, we are building the boat to the same set of rules as a 50 metre, but the client and crew get so much more space with this layout.”

The reward for these trailblazing owners? They got a brand new boat in about the time it would have taken to refit an existing yacht. The news for Hakvoort is good, too: the halted 64 metre project has a new owner and is back under construction, paving the way for growth for the next generation of big boats in little Monnickendam. ■



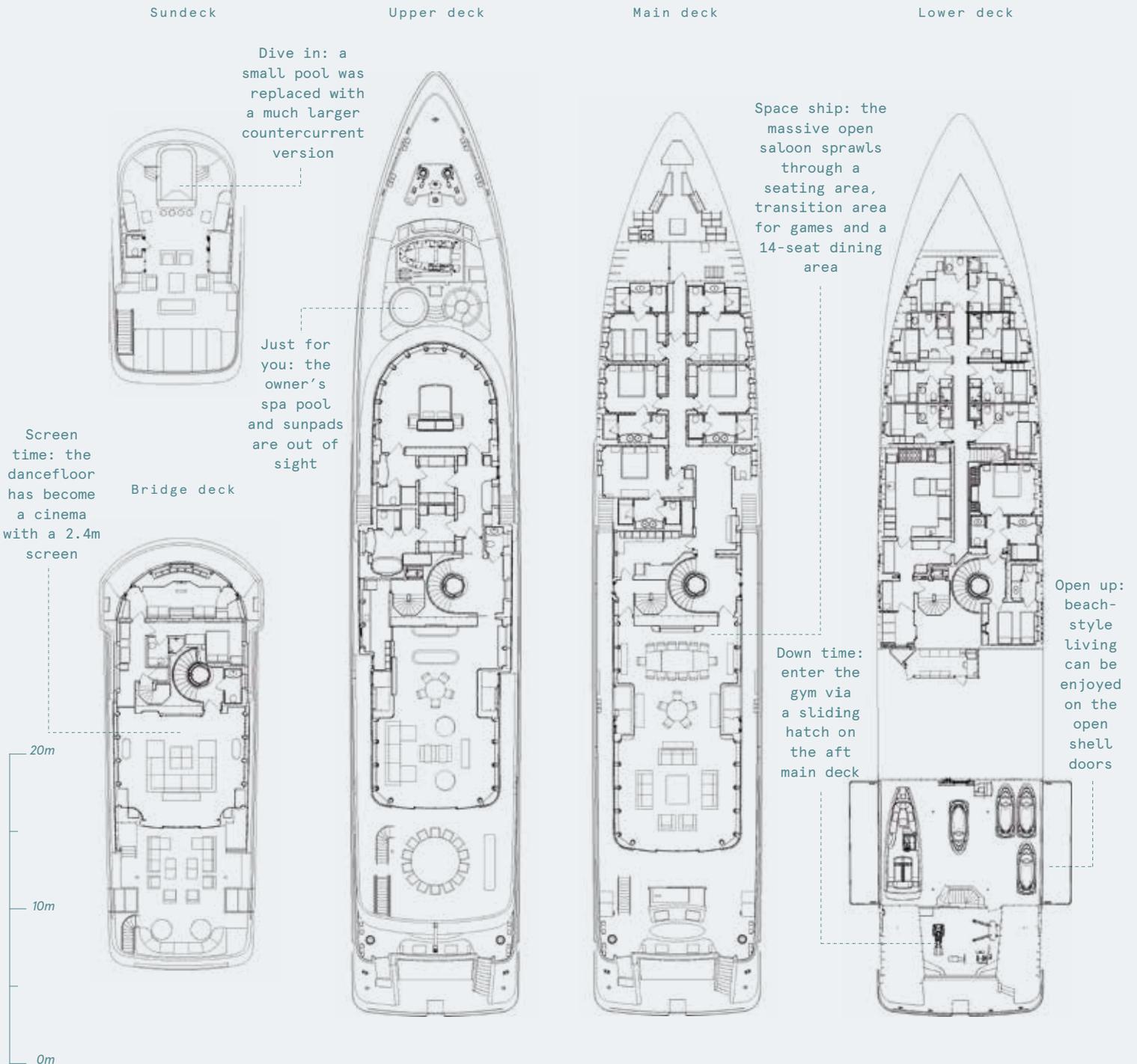
Right: the wheelhouse, three decks up and with wing stations, offers the captain and crew outstanding views



Clockwise from above: there's dining room for 14 in the main saloon; the garage door open; the

owner's private deck forward, with spa pool, cannot be seen from the bridge or the sundeck





LOA 61m
LWL 50.4m
Beam 11m
Draught (full load) 3.37m
Gross tonnage 1,219GT
Engines
 2 x Caterpillar
 3512C, 1,174kW

@ 1,800rpm
Speed max/cruise
 15.5/13 knots
Range at 12 knots
 4,000nm
Generators
 2 x Caterpillar C18
 275kW @ 1,500rpm

Fuel capacity
 120,000 litres
Freshwater capacity
 20,000 litres
Tenders
 1 x 6.8m Tender
 Shipyard TS68
Owners/guests 16

Crew 17
Construction Steel
 hull; aluminium
 superstructure
Classification
 Lloyd's #100 A1 SSC
 Yacht Mono G6 #LMC,
 UMS, MCA, LY2

Naval architecture
 Diana Yacht Design
Exterior styling
 Sinot Exclusive
 Yacht Design
Interior design
 Sinot Exclusive
 Yacht Design

Builder/year
 Hakvoort
 Shipyard/2016
 Monnickendam,
 Netherlands
 t: +31 299 651403
 e: sales@hakvoort.com
 w: hakvoort.com