

LUNAR

A YACHT OWNER SEEKING TO
ESCAPE THE DAILY ROUTINE HELPED
PRODUCE A VESSEL THAT IS
ANYTHING BUT ROTE.

TEXT BY CECILE GAUERT



In time for its 10th anniversary last year, Polish yacht builder Conrad unveiled its largest yacht to date, a custom motorsailer combining features from different genres into one very original 116-foot cruiser named *Lunar*—a finalist for both the 2014 ShowBoats Design Awards and the World Superyacht Awards.

Docked at the end of the yacht extension at the Cannes boat show, in full view of all ferries and water taxis, she attracted quite a few looks, comments and a few questions too.

That's because she hardly fits into a neat category. Her shapely metallic silver hull features high bulwarks arching up to a high point just forward of amidships to envelop the foredeck before sloping toward the bow. In sharp contrast with her rather organic hull shapes are a vertical bow and large rectangular portholes. A flybridge tops her white superstructure, which incorporates a raised pilothouse. A ketch rig rises high above her decks. Yet, her volume (owing in part to her exceptional beam) and her amenities are more closely related to that of a motor yacht.

If she fits with any genre, it is that of motorsailer, a relatively fluid concept, which occasionally attracts derisive comments, especially from sailors, as a “neither-nor” type of craft. But it is the type of vessel that provides the pleasure of sailing without some of the discomforts associated with it. Perhaps the best definition of a motorsailer is a craft able to motor and sail at about the same speed, and *Lunar* can do just that, reaching 12 knots under sail with good wind condi-

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Curved bulwarks envelop the bow, and an advanced automated sailing system developed with Cariboni relies on captive winches and Magic Trim cylinders, meeting the owner's desire for a sailboat with a small crew and safe for even young children. The tender well converts into a swimming pool on the bow (below).

tions or cruising with her twin Caterpillar C18 engines.

A progressive Eastern European client of the shipyard, located in Gdansk, provided the impetus for the custom design of this first Conrad 115, now being marketed by brokerage firm YPI.

The client was familiar with the riverfront shipyard, as he had a 66-foot Conrad sailing yacht, one of the first models developed in house. Conrad Shipyard was established in 2003 as an offshoot of Marine Projects Ltd., a privately owned company that builds hulls up to 330 feet. The new yard set up shop in an existing facility bearing Polish-born mariner-turned-author Joseph Conrad's name. The first yacht to ever come out of the shipyard was a custom Bill Dixon-designed motor yacht for an American client, the 88-foot steel-hulled *Escape S* launched in 2005. Conrad, which also does refits, has gone on to build 16 more vessels, most in steel or aluminum, a pace that allows for customizing each yacht.

The owner of *Lunar* enjoyed his Conrad 66 for years but wanted something bigger and more comfortable to cruise with his multi-generational family. He started a dialogue with Conrad Chairman Mikolaj Krol, outlining several imperatives: a family-friendly yacht with extended range (able to cruise under power from Gdansk to Tarragona, Spain) and a small crew. He did not want too much heeling, which his wife does not enjoy, and specified a maximum 10-degree list angle. He also wanted to be able to see the bow area at all times from a comfortable entertainment-oriented salon occupying a good half of the main deck. Cooking on board was to be a family affair. A large pool was a must to entertain the kids, who also had to be able to get around the deck safely.

The owner trusted Conrad to build a quality interior as well as to come up with the ideal layout according to his





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wishes. The shipyard developed the interior concept to include many social areas, spacious guest cabins and ample deck spaces, while concurrently working on the naval architecture with Vripack and Yacht Studio Strawinski. Krol also tapped designer Frank Neubelt, who was then principal of Newcruise Yacht Projects & Design, for styling and exterior design.

Neubelt was at first not quite sure what to make of the motorsailer idea. “Being a sailor, I wanted to see some performance,” he says. Ultimately he also got involved in the hull lines and the choice of rigging, making the case for high-performance carbon fiber masts and booms. The designer and the client, who do not speak the same language, relied on sketches to flesh out the initial concept for the exterior lines. The conversation progressed with a succession of thumbs up and thumbs down. Several weeks went by before a second meeting, and Neubelt could not stop thinking about the concept. He knew the client liked cars and so he began inserting a few fluid lines, inspired by automotive design.

By then, the project had moved forward with the client

pleased with the layout and overall concept for a 116-foot two-masted all-aluminum motorsailer. The design Neubelt worked on included a wide hull flattening out at the transom and low-resistance entry with a vertical bow. He accentuated the automotive features while striving for an overall streamlined look. When Neubelt unveiled his idea, the client was quiet at first. Taking his time to consider the unconventional design in front of him, he then enthusiastically embraced the final drawings. “I very much like what we created together,” says Neubelt. “I was impressed with this gentleman. He is open minded and creative.”

Knowing a bit more about the background helps appreciate what was accomplished on this family cruiser. *Lunar* is very stable with two rudders, a long keel and two gyrostabilizers housed in her engine room working in concert with the hull form. She also sails nicely, with her top speed to date recorded as 13.5 knots in reaching seas.

“The typical motorsailer is a sailboat that tends to be more superyacht. This is much more a sailer,” says Vripack’s Bart Bouwhuis. His challenge was an engineering one, due

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A living area
aft (above and
opposite bottom)
and another big
salon with views
forward (opposite top) accommodate the needs of a large family spending extended time on board.



in part to class requirements and to the hull shape and uncluttered decks presenting few options for the vertical rigging. “What I like very much about the boat is that it is a family boat,” Bouwhuis says.

Indeed, the specific and detailed ideas the owner had all contributed to a very comfortable yacht that makes it easy for anyone to get around.

I took a tour in Cannes and found myself settling quite comfortably on board, so much so that I lost track of time. The salon is hospitable with sunlight pouring through the windows. As I talked with Krol and Neubelt, standing by a large, attractive bar and a glistening case of perfectly stowed stemware, I cast a glance at the video of *Lunar* under sail running in a loop on the large TV screen. She looked majestic.

Designers, when discussing yacht design that appeals to the American market, often mention ergonomics. This yacht, while conceived by and for a gentleman from the Baltic, has the kind of dimensions, space and comfortable furnishings that would appeal to American boaters. There is no squeezing into anything. Everything, from passageways to the salon seats (think La-Z-Boy) to the 28-foot-wide master stateroom and the giant plasma screens, would satisfy anyone placing comfort and size high on their list.

Her exterior features, including two stairways flanking the transom, are that of a motor yacht. The yacht is fitted with

an Opacmare Transformer platform and passerelle that adjusts to the dock height and also lowers below the water surface to make ocean access easier for all.

From the aft deck, set up as a social and entertainment area, walking around the deck proves easy. Most deckware is concealed, leaving the deck free and clear and presenting few opportunities to stub your toes or bruise your shins. The teak-laid side decks are wide, and the bulwarks, getting higher as you move forward, provide a great sense of safety. You get the feeling as you walk forward that you are going down (and you are), an intentional design trick to optimize the view forward. The pool, which can drain in two minutes to satisfy class requirements, is at the center of the foredeck area but leaves plenty of room to move around.

I notice the nice paint job on the superstructure and perfect seals around the storm-resistant double-pane windshield. The hatches are by Rondal; the sturdy wipers are by Speich; the masts and custom-made booms by Lorima; the sails by North Sails and the winches by Maxwell.

An automated system manages the sails and furlers with

a helm station on the flybridge offering a pleasant post in fair weather. With the owner's desire to operate this big yacht with a small crew, the ketch rig and automation make perfect sense. High-low tables and sofas nearby allow the family to cruise together. Since this is a long-distance cruiser (with a range of 3,600 nautical miles under power) and likely to run into some weather, a second bridge with full electronics by Furuno is located inside the raised pilothouse.

The shipyard opted for this raised pilothouse design, in part, as a way to divide the main deck into two distinct salons, without closing up the interior space. It creates a logical flow on the main deck. On the starboard side are stairs leading to the pilothouse, with a decorative stainless steel banister designed and built in-house; on the other is a large pantry serving an impressive bar and dining area aft. Light floods in from skylights onto flooring in light oak and easy-to-maintain tiles (the family dog gets to go sailing). The walls are attractively finished with a warm, glossy veneer alternating with Alcantara upholstery. The first salon is more a family room, with a dining area. The second one

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The raised pilot-house (left top) is a social area whereas the galley (left bottom) is the family's domain. Aside from the master suite (below), the guest cabins have convertible twin beds for flexibility (opposite right).



“From my point of view, *Lunar* is inventing a new category of performance motorsailer yacht.” – DESIGNER FRANK NEUBELT



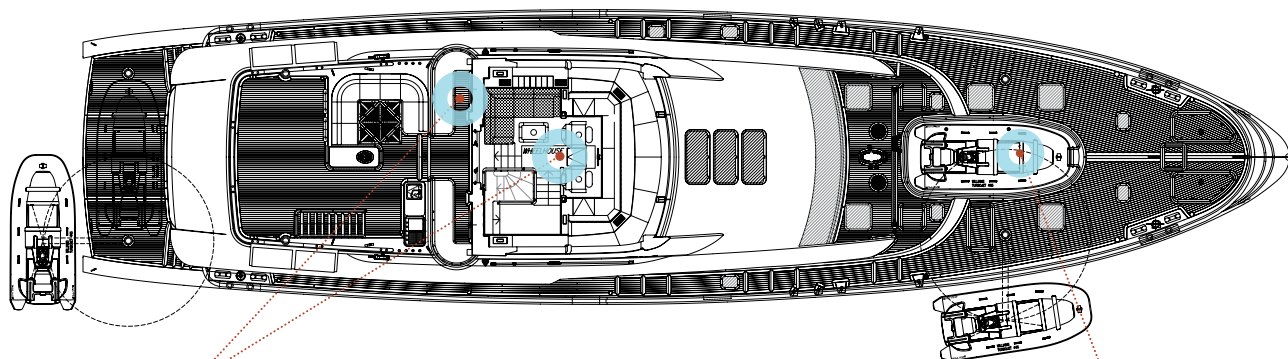
is an entertainment lounge with swiveling chairs, sofas and an 84-inch-wide screen.

The unconventional layout belowdecks also reflects the owner's wishes for a family yacht. The crew cabins and mess are forward and not connected to the yacht's main galley, which is located with the guest cabins, though removed from the master. The nicely laid-out and fully equipped galley benefiting from hull windows is the family's domain. For practicality it is equipped with a dumbwaiter.

The spacious guest cabins can be converted from twins to a double with sliding berths. The palatial master suite is located amidships where it is the least susceptible to motion. A backlit onyx headboard and sparkling steel accents enliven the warm wood. Here again, a close-up look reveals good finishes, matching veneers and tightfitting doors and drawers. It's all been done in house under Krol's supervision, as Conrad's head designer. He is justifiably proud of the results. In addition to boat building, furniture making has been a side business for Conrad, which has built pieces for its clients' homes and offices.

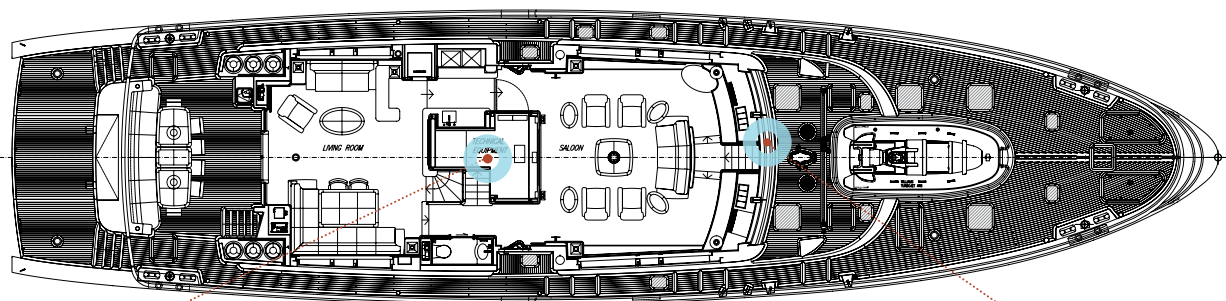
As I disembark after a thorough visit, I have a new appreciation for the vessel and the thinking behind her. “There will be comments on the style and ideas, but from my point of view *Lunar* is inventing a new category of performance motorsailer yacht,” Neubelt says. So when I heard someone on the ferry ask what that silver yacht was, I chimed in knowingly, “That is *Lunar*; she's a whole new thing.”

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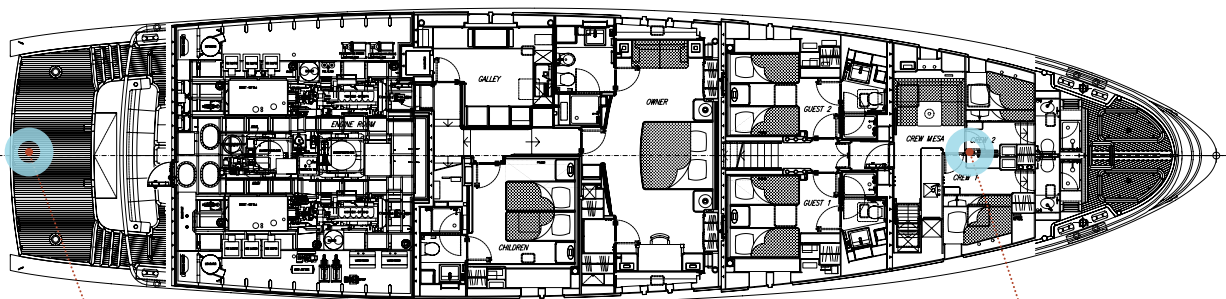
IN CONTROL: Two helms, one indoor, one outdoor, centralize the automated sailing system's controls, ideal for shorthanded sailing.

FUN TIMES: A saltwater pool keeps kids entertained and accommodates one of two tenders; it drains in two minutes.



LAYOUT LOGIC: The raised pilothouse provides a logical division between the two salons and a stream of light from skylights.

CLEAR VIEW: Windows made of double-pane glass negate the need for storm shutters and allow for great views.



EASY DOES IT: The 64-square-foot platform lowers to ease swimmers and divers into the water or rises to dock level.

CREW TIME: Two well-finished crew cabins forward have their own entrance and private mess for meal times.

Specifications:

Builder: Conrad Shipyard
Sienna 45
80-605 Gdansk
Poland
Tel: +48 58 320 56 00
www.conradshipyard.com

LOA: 115' 10" (35.3m)
LWL: 105' 4" (32.1m)
BEAM: 28' 3" (8.6m)
DRAFT: 9' 10" (3m)
DISPLACEMENT (LIGHTSHIP): 82 tonnes
GROSS TONNAGE: 243 GT
RIG: Ketch
SPARS AND RIGGING: Lorima
SAILS: North Sails

WINCHES: Maxwell
POWER: 2 x 715-hp Cat C18 ACERT
SPEED UNDER POWER (MAX CRUISE): 14/12 knots
RANGE: 3,600 nm @ 12 knots
FUEL CAPACITY: 9,589 U.S. gallons
GENERATORS: 2 x 86kW Cat C4.4
STABILIZERS: 2 x Seakeeper Gyrostabilizers
WATER CAPACITY: 1,611 U.S. gallons

OWNERS AND GUESTS: 8
CREW: 4
CONSTRUCTION: Aluminum
CLASSIFICATION: Lloyd's ✕ 100 A1, SSC, Yacht, Mono, G6, ✕ LMC; MCA LY2 compliant
NAVAL ARCHITECTURE: Conrad, Vripack, Yacht Studio Strawinski
EXTERIOR STYLIST: Newcruise Yacht Projects & Design
INTERIOR DESIGN: Conrad Shipyard