

GRAND ENTRANCE

BY JUSTIN RATCLIFFE

MONDOMARINE
TAPS A RISING DESIGNER
TO SHAPE THE STYLISH,
INNOVATIVE,
139-FOOT *SERENITY*.



Custom yachtbuilder Mondomarine of Savona, Italy, has a reputation for drawing on the talents of both established and aspiring designers. It collaborates with luminaries such as Luca Dini, Francesco Paszkowski and Luiz de Basto, but also encourages less prominent names to make their mark.

One such is Luca Vallebona, an architect from Sardinia who worked with Nauta Design in Milan before a meeting with Mondomarine's representative in the Middle East led to his first solo project. It is his head-turning exterior styling that defines *Serenity*, a 139-foot (42.3-meter) semi-displacement yacht that made her debut at the Monaco Yacht Show last fall.

"The owner presented a tricky list of requirements," Vallebona says. "He basically wanted an innovative-looking yacht that would give him clear views of the bow and foredeck from his stateroom, and complete privacy from the other guest areas and crew passageways through the yacht, even to the point of having his own personal laundry. It wasn't easy to find solutions to all these demands given the size of the yacht."

In part because of these challenges, the project grew by nearly 25 feet from its original 115-foot LOA. But Vallebona's exterior design remained faithful to the initial concept, and he describes *Serenity* as "a very real boat," in the sense that there is nothing superfluous or trendy in her exterior lines. Clearly influenced by his architectural training, the designer favored bold forms and crisp planes to create a profile that is well-balanced and contemporary without being overtly fashionable. Moreover, the near-vertical bow adds an element of seaworthiness and adventure that is more in line with a steel-hulled

explorer than an all-aluminum cruiser capable of 18 knots.

But the bow shape is not just a styling statement. With naval architecture carried out in-house by Mondomarine using computational fluid dynamics, the hull form was developed to provide a flexible series platform that can be adapted for use as a full-displacement hull by adding a bulbous bow. Three hull and bow configurations were tank tested, and the current design proved exceptionally efficient. Despite displacing around 300 tons, *Serenity* is powered by relatively modest MTU 12V 2000 M94 main engines and has a range of more than 4,500 nautical miles at an economical speed of 12 knots.

Vallebona's solution to ensuring unhindered sight lines from the master stateroom was to introduce a split-level layout for the owner's suite on the upper deck. The 430 square feet of cabin space, which has direct access to the side companionways and two fold-down balconies, has panoramic views through the raked-forward windscreen to the bow. A particularly spacious bathroom and dressing space with central bathtub is on an intermediate level between the upper and main decks.

The split-level arrangement provides space for a technical deck for the mooring hardware and rescue tender that are housed out of sight under the foredeck, but relegates the wheelhouse to the sundeck (and the captain's cabin to the lower deck) as a raised pilot-house. Nonetheless, the wheelhouse is equipped with wing stations and an integrated bridge with electronics engineering by Pariani, which specializes in consoles for the aviation industry. Unusual for a yacht of her size, *Serenity* also has an inspection tunnel linking the engine room with the forward crew quarters.



ABOVE: Mondomarine chose emerging designer Luca Vallebona to pen the exterior lines of 139-foot *Serenity*. BELOW: The sundeck is all about fun in the sun. OPPOSITE PAGE: The interior design by Fatema Almaidan draws on Western and Middle Eastern cultural cues.



MONDOMARINE TURNS 100

Mondomarine celebrated 100 years of history last summer with a floodlit *Serenity* as the centerpiece of the gala celebrations. Although the brand name was established in 1978, its heritage dates back to the turn of the century and the Campanella shipyard, which occupied the current production site and launched early superyachts such as 157-foot (48-meter) *Mohamedia* for Adnan Khashoggi, the Saudi Arabian billionaire.

A watershed Mondomarine project was *Tribù*, the 165-foot (50.5-meter) explorer completed in 2007 for the consumer fashion mogul Luciano Benetton, but in 2013 a new owner took over the reins of the shipyard. Much like the famous TV ad in which Victor Kiam was so impressed with the Remington shaver that he bought

the company, Italian entrepreneur Alessandro Falciai acquired the brand following the refitting of his own classic motoryacht at the yard.

Falciai is an unusual shipyard owner. He comes from a seafaring family and was primed to follow a naval career, including a stint as a cadet aboard the sail-training vessel *Amerigo Vespucci*. Instead, he chose to study aeronautics and worked for the European Space Research and Technology Centre before pursuing a business career in telecommunications. He is also one of the few yacht owners with a license to pilot a vessel over 500 gross tons. More recently, Mondomarine acquired the formerly defunct Cantieri di Pisa, where production of a restyled version of the iconic *Akhir* is about to start. —J.R.



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: The split-level layout provides the owner's stateroom on the upper deck with unhindered forward views.

Another request of the owner's was for a very stable boat. Initial studies into a hybrid stabilization system using gyros combined with conventional fins proved unfeasible at semi-displacement speeds. Instead, the shipyard opted for hydraulic zero-speed stabilizers, but at more than 37 square feet (3.5 square meters) apiece, the fins are considerably larger than the norm for the size of the yacht. Although they necessarily produce more resistance, the yacht's maximum speed is still 2 knots faster than the contractual requirement.

Low noise levels are a given on today's superyachts, and *Serenity's* "floating" interior is flexibly mounted to avoid structure-borne vibrations. Materials for acoustic insulation and fire protection have developed way beyond the standard rock wool, which tends to disintegrate over time and fill cavities with a fine metallic dust. Mondomarine uses slim boards of calcium silicate derived from the residential sector that are lightweight and easy to apply between bulkhead panels. The material is more effective at damping sound and provides up to three hours of flame protection, well in excess of the 60-minute regulatory standard. The regulations are primarily aimed at preserving human life at sea, but Mondomarine believes that efforts should also be made to protect what is a very expensive piece of real estate.

Beyond the split-level owner's suite, *Serenity's* interior layout follows a more conventional formula with four guest staterooms on the lower deck, an open-plan salon and dining room on the main deck with fold-down bulwarks, and a sky lounge on the upper deck that also serves as a cinema. The interior design by Fatema Almaidan of SFL Design is tastefully subdued and inspired by a range of Western and Arabic cultural cues.

"Different cultures and civilizations are what feeds my imagination," says the Dubai-based designer. "I was mainly inspired by the Moorish architecture and décor of Andalusia, but added other Western touches to provide luxury, warmth and practicality."

Dark rosewood with a high-gloss finish is the sole veneer used throughout the interior, contrasted with cream leather and white lacquered surfaces. Adding richness and personality to this base palette of tones and textures are no fewer than seven varieties of stone (amounting to some 8 tons), from Calacatta and portoro marble to nuvolato and green Pakistan onyx. A recurring leitmotif that underscores the owner's Middle Eastern origins and the interior designer's love of Moorish architecture is the rosewood fretwork covering the backlit wall and overhead panels.

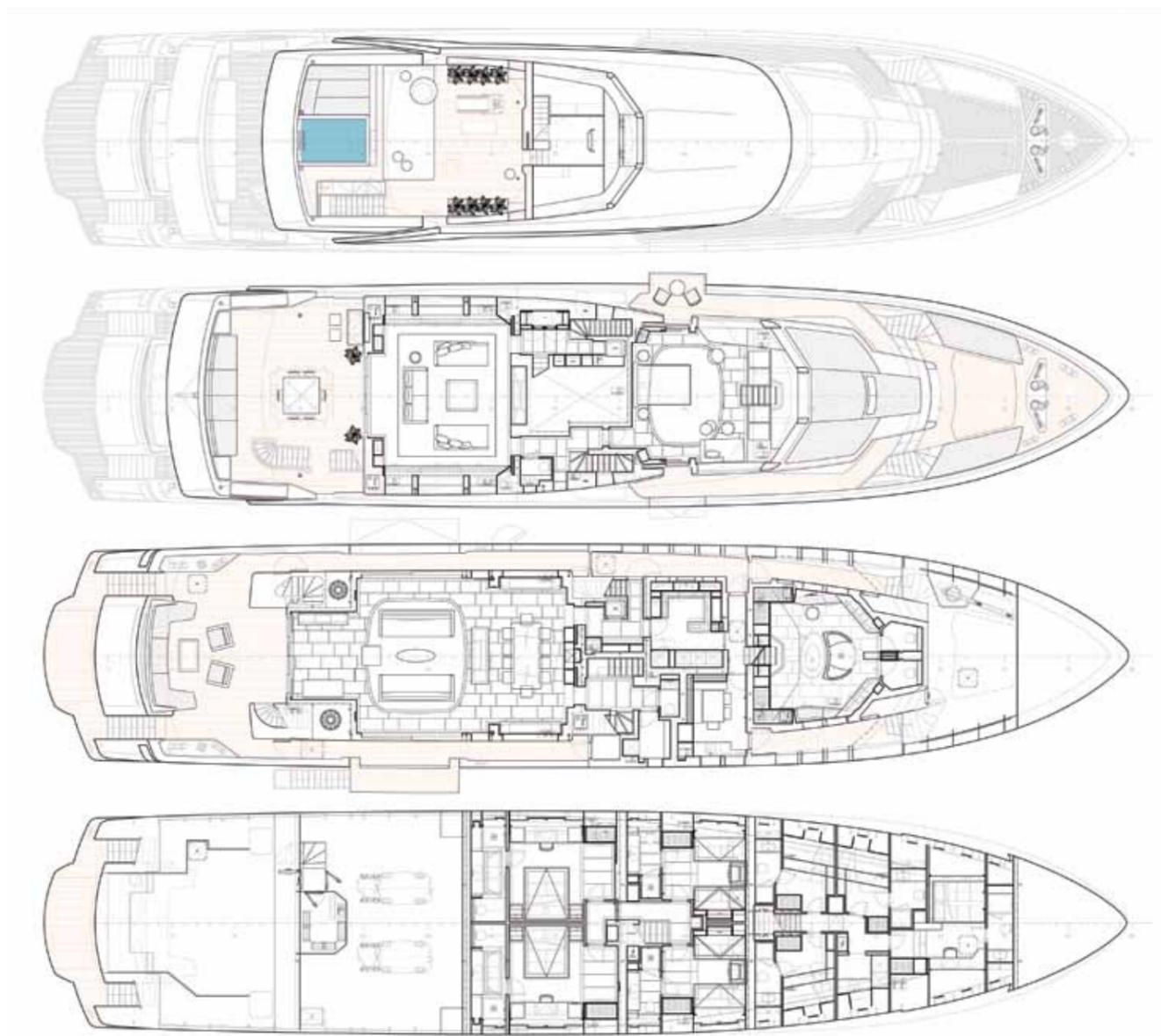


ABOVE: The color palette in the sky lounge/cinema room is particularly bright and breezy. RIGHT: The cavernous owner's bathroom with its central tub.

High-gloss surfaces and polished stone may be luxurious, but they can also appear a mite frosty, so Almaidan selected bespoke silk and velvet fabrics supplied by an artisan firm in Florence in shades of warm plum and brick red, and added a bioethanol fireplace in the main salon. Ceramic mosaics are part and parcel of the Moorish culture, and the designer came up with her own interpretation in the owner's bathroom—in many ways the interior centerpiece—that features an intricate mosaic of blue roses in Bisazza tiles on the curved partition between the bathtub and shower stall. For the rest, the interior is decidedly Mediterranean in tone with furnishings and fixtures by high-end Italian brands such as Poltrona Frau, Donghia, Promemoria and Artemide, and a crystal glass chandelier over the dining table by Patrizia Garganti.

"I like to focus on harmonious proportions and volumes, and I think *Serenity's* exterior design and general arrangement are good examples of this," Vallebona says of his first foray into superyacht territory. "Nothing is over-designed, which is the way it should be." ❧

For more information: +377 97 77 20 80, mondomarine.mc



MONDOMARINE SERENITY

LOA: 138ft. 10in. (42.33m)
BEAM: 28ft. 10in. (8.8m)
DRAFT: 7ft. 2in. (2.2m)
CONSTRUCTION: aluminum
DISPLACEMENT (full load): 353 tons
GROSS TONNAGE: 496
ENGINES: 2 x 1,920-hp (@2450 rpm) MTU 12V 2000 M94
PROPELLERS: 5-blade NiBrAl, ISO 484 Class S, ISO 1940 Grade 16

FUEL: 16,600 gal. (63,000L)
WATER: 3,830 gal. (14,500L)
SPEED (max.): 18 knots
SPEED (cruising): 16.5 knots
RANGE: 4,500 nm at 12 knots
GENERATORS: 2 x 100 kW Kohler 100EFOZD
STABILIZERS: Naiad zero speed
CLASSIFICATION: RINA C HULL MACH Ych; unrestricted navigation, comf (Y); Green Plus (Y)

NAVAL ARCHITECTURE: Mondomarine
EXTERIOR DESIGN: Luca Vallebona
INTERIOR DESIGN: Fatema Almaidan (SFL Design)
GUESTS: 10 guests in 4 cabins + 1 master suite
CREW: 3 double cabins + 1 captain's cabin
BUILDER: Mondomarine
YEAR: 2015