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WHALE SHARKS
IN THE MALDIVES



She's got range, and she knows how to use it. On board Serenity...

Words - Maria Roberta Morso Photography - Alberto Cocchi

Arabian Nights



The owner's split-level suite has a huge en suite a few steps down featuring a stunning freestanding tub. Opposite: Also on the owner's deck, a cheerful family lounge doubles as a cinema room.

Serenity may project calm and composure, but she certainly isn't idle. After her debut at the Monaco Yacht Show in September 2015, this unconventional yacht built at Mondomarine returned to the yard in Savona, Italy, to prepare for a 4,500-mile trip across the Mediterranean Sea, down the Suez Canal and to Dubai via Oman. And then, after the Dubai International Boat Show in March, she headed for a cruise in the Oman fjords.

It was Mondomarine's dealer in Dubai, SF Yachts, who initiated the conversation for the concept that became the SF40. The builder, well-versed in metal construction, and its Middle East dealer tapped Luca Vallebona, a young Italian designer who'd worked with Nauta Design, to come up with a line of semi-displacement yachts in aluminum with innovative styling. It had to be fresh and modern, said Vallebona, but not so much that it would make it difficult to sell as a semi-custom yacht to owners shopping in the mid-size range.

"This is the first unit of the Mondomarine SF line, a new concept born to provide a clean and well-balanced design, together with a new conception of internal and external volumes and layout," says the designer. "Themes like space and its flow, as well as a general balance within the profile, are at the core of this choice.

"The distinctively clean exterior and interior lines produce a

timeless sense of luxury, immune from the influence of fashion and very focused on the enjoyment of the [environment] and on the rediscovery of the essence of travel, adventure...without any ostentation."

That was the premise for the SF line. *Serenity*, in the end, is the result of collaboration between designer, dealer, yard and her owner, a yachting enthusiast with definite ideas.

"The owner asked for great views from his cabin and absolute privacy from the crew," says Vallebona, who worked on a functional layout fulfilling these two key requests. An increase in the overall length from the initial plan helped achieve it and also benefitted the exterior and interior spaces, as well as the exterior lines. The outcome is a yacht a hair under 139 feet in length with a 29-foot beam and attributes likely to attract yacht owners anywhere in the world, not least of which an owner's deck.

Vallebona's styling is dynamic and modern but appealingly so. Dramatically slanted fashion plates and dark, ribbon-like windows enhance the harmonious relationship between the hull and superstructure. "We might define the SF40's line as classic in the sense that her silhouette is not over-designed. I didn't feel the need to add any attention-grabbing feature to provide her with an extra feel of dynamism," says Vallebona.

Her interesting layout and interior design earned *Serenity* a spot among finalists at the 2016 ShowBoats Design Awards and at the World Superyacht Awards. The layout's signature feature is the owner's split-level suite with a panoramic stateroom on the upper



deck. A huge bathroom with a dramatic freestanding bathtub, beautiful mosaics and marble floor, plus a good-size dressing area, is a few steps down. With its 180-degree views through five big windows – fitted with adjustable blinds – the owner stateroom is airy and bright, while a luxurious yet fresh décor imparts a laid-back atmosphere. High-gloss rosewood veneer on bulkheads and custom furniture offers a pleasant contrast to a floor in Portoro-framed white Calacatta marble. The more private bathroom below receives light from large skylights.

Direct access from the stateroom to the forward deck area allows the owner to reach a raised plinth covered with a sunpad and relax under the sun while enjoying great views. On both sides of the cabin, a fold-down balcony further enlarges the available space and brings the outdoors in.

The upper deck is dedicated wholly to the owner. In addition to sleeping quarters, there is a family lounge that doubles as a cinema room. Unfolding the curtains reveals prints of famous movies in the room's cheerful and theme-appropriate décor. Soft materials and leather-covered panels by Foglizzo (complementing insulation materials) minimize noise and enhance the film-watching experience. The family lounge opens onto a spacious terrace with a dining table for up to 10 people, a bar area and comfortable seating.

Vallebona distributed *Serenity*'s social and private areas over three decks plus a sun deck. The bridge occupies a space mid-level between the sun and upper decks. While the design does not allow

for a captain's cabin adjacent to the bridge, the setup affords the captain superb views and privacy while the yacht is underway. The captain has a double cabin with private bathroom, along with the rest of the crew of eight, forward on the lower deck.

Accessed through large doors from the main aft deck, the salon offers guests and visitors their first impression and it makes a great statement. Full-height glazing and fold-down balconies on both sides turn the salon into a floating terrace with unrivaled sea views.

The décor stems from Fatima Ahmed Al Maidan. An interior designer from the Middle East, she previously worked on the interior of a Benetti Tradition 105 and a Riviera 77, plus upscale residential projects that share with her yacht interiors a sophisticated contemporary interpretation of Oriental style. Clues of her cultural heritage are evident in the color palette that enlivens the family salon and guest cabins: rich mustard-yellow coupled to red or intense green, flashes of gold enriching fabrics and details, basin tops in sumptuous pink, green or yellow onyx.

Al Maidan selected refined materials to give the salon a low-key luxurious tone. High-gloss rosewood and a backlit fresco accent lacquered white panels. A fireplace set inside a low buffet divides the dining and seating areas, the latter featuring matching sofas in charcoal-gray velvet by Antico Setificio Fiorentino. Full-height mirror panels on the forward bulkhead multiply the space, perspective and light.



Above: Full-height windows in the main salon, as well as fold-down balconies on either side, turn this space into “a floating terrace.”
Below: Bright-green vertical gardens over the beds in the guest cabins are part of Serenity’s distinctive décor.



Belowdecks, a flavor of *One Thousand and One Nights* vitalizes the guests’ quarters. Each of the four stylish guest suites shows the owner’s concern for his visitors’ onboard comfort.

“I gave the interiors a very clean design so as not to overwhelm guests with too many visual [stimuli],” Al Maidan says. “Each suite has its color scheme matched by the bathroom’s onyx basin tops. Fancy touches are provided by richly decorated fabrics and decorative features such as the two vibrant green vertical gardens hanging above the beds in both double and VIP cabins.”

Outside, guests benefit from a whole range of options to mingle with family and friends or relax in solitude – from the sun deck with its infinity-style pool clad in shimmering Bisazza blue tiles and adjacent to a large sunbathing area, to the owner’s terrace and to the main aft deck with its comfy settee.

“The entire yacht concept is based upon maximizing external spaces,” says Vallebona. “The structure is built to free space on the aft decks and on the main deck forward, too.” Helping achieve the maximum volume is the yacht’s nearly straight bow design.

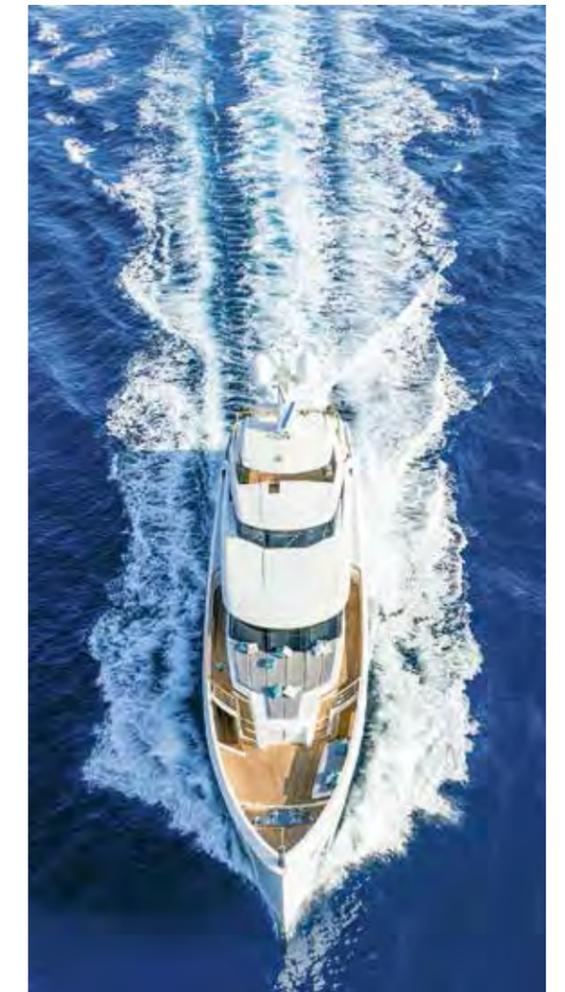
Last but not least, a huge swim platform allows everyone to enjoy direct contact with the sea. Walking down one of the symmetrical staircases that flank the transom to this platform, you notice details such as well-laid-out teak planks with neat black caulking.

But nowhere is Mondomarine’s expertise more visible than in the tidy and expertly arranged engine room, where all machinery and systems are easily accessible. Propelled by twin MTU 12V 2000 M94 engines that occupy the machinery space’s central section, *Serenity* achieves a top speed of 17.5 knots. At her economic speed of 12 knots, the 16,642-gallon fuel tanks provide a remarkable 4,500-nautical mile range.

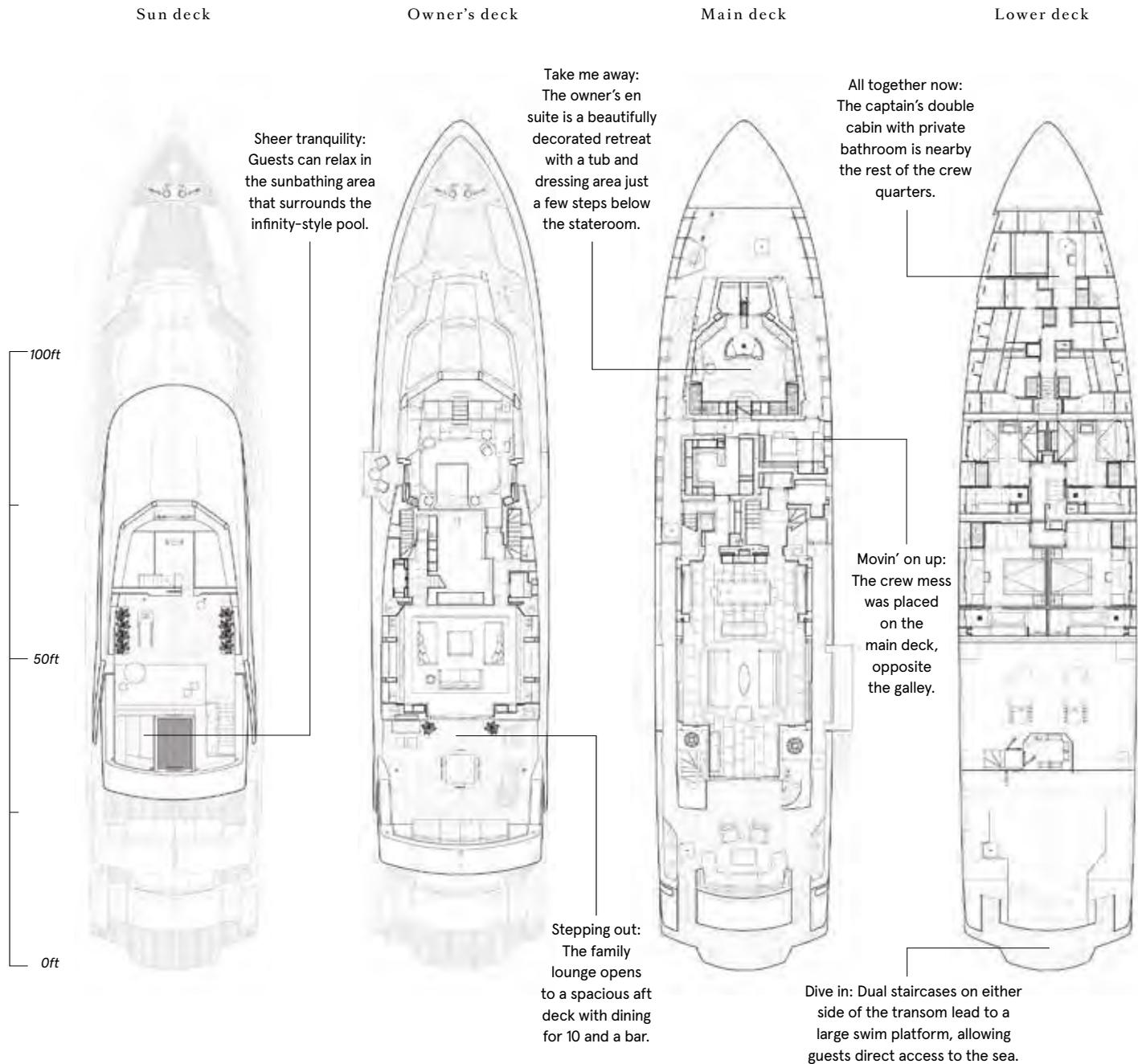
There’s more to come in the SF line, which starts with an SF30 and goes up to an SF60. As Mondomarine builds upon its 100-year history, it marches on with new ownership, a recently opened Monaco office and ambition to grow in markets far beyond its historic home. *Serenity* is a good addition, sure to garner attention in the Middle East and beyond. ■



The owner can enjoy privacy and great views from the master stateroom terrace or mingle with guests in the infinity-style pool on the sun deck (below).



Serenity – Mondomarine



LOA: 138' 10" (42.3m)
Beam: 28' 10" (8.8m)
Draft: 7' 2" (2.2m)
Gross tonnage: 496 GT
Power: 2 x 1,919-hp
 MTU 12V 2000 M94

Speed (max/cruise):
 17.5/16.5 knots
Range: 4,500 nm @ 12 knots
Fuel capacity:
 16,642 U.S. gallons
Freshwater capacity:
 3,696 U.S. gallons

Stabilizers: 2 x NAIAD fins
 620S@A
Owner and guests: 10
Crew: 8
Tender: Castoldi jet 19
Construction: Aluminum
Hull type: Semi-displacement

Classification: RINA C ⌘ HULL
 ⌘ MACH, YCH Unrestricted
 Navigation; MCA LY3
 compliant
Naval architecture:
 Mondomarine Engineering
Exterior styling:
 Luca Vallebona/SFL Design

Interior design: Fatima Ahmed
 Al Maidan/SFL Design
Builder/year:
 Mondomarine/2015
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