

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

NORTHCOAST YACHTS PURPOSELY WENT OUT ON A

DESIGN LIMB WITH ITS SPEC-BUILT 125. BY DIANE M. BYRNE



THE NORTHCOAST 125'S WELL-ORGANIZED HELM CONSOLE FEATURES HATTELAND DISPLAY SCREENS.

NEIL RABINOWITZ

Mention a megayacht builder that has embarked on a spec project within the past two years and chances are high that knowledgeable people will blanch. It's been—and continues to be—a challenge to sign a buyer to a new-build contract, or even sell a yacht, on the somewhat saturated brokerage market.

Raise the idea with Stephen Yadvish, however, and he might grin. The owner of Northcoast Yachts (along with the craftsmen at his Washington State yard) not only conceived of a 125 to be built on spec, but also proceeded to build her while the global economy continued to weaken.

Yadvish has reason to be proud of this 125. Contrary to the approach other spec builders take, she's not a "vanilla" yacht intended for broad appeal. Certainly, she has her share of features that should please a variety of owners. But this Northcoast also dares to be different, in some pretty dramatic ways. In fact, she makes an impression aesthetically and sensibly, with more details than I expected to find in a spec build.

When's the last time you entered through afterdeck doors straight into a dining area, for example? And just who decided the saloon should always be aft, anyway? Yadvish and Paul Frederickson, Northcoast's in-house naval architect, took better advantage of the yacht's architecture with their decidedly different approach. The dining area enjoys unobstructed views across the afterdeck, as well as to port and starboard, over the tops of rosewood cabinetry (built in-house and with snugly fit dovetail joints, by the way). Aiding the views, the caprails are a bit lower than the side windows.

Now consider the fact that some yachts in this size range position the requisite large-screen television so that it rises from a console outboard or amidships in the saloon. But this interrupts the line of sight around the room or out the windows. Northcoast avoids the problem by mounting the 60-inch television on the forward bulkhead. That bulkhead is transformed into an upscale media center through the use of rich rosewood and leather-wrapped panels. Note "wrapped"—they're not stitched. The leather had to be stretched carefully to envelop the panels,

an admittedly more expensive approach, but one that Yadvish says was worth it. The use of rosewood, accented with ebony throughout the 125, was also more expensive—as was the fact that it's solid wood, not veneers adhered to plywood.

Headroom in the foyer, given the raised pilothouse, is an impressive nine feet—the sense of volume here makes you feel as if you're aboard a larger yacht. Standing here with the curving stairway, you may even find sailing yachts come to mind. The floating stairs feature cabling under what Yadvish says is 1,500 pounds of tension. The overall design is intended to mimic rigging. It's creative, and effective.

The same holds true in the forward master suite. The sleeping area seems fairly conventional, save for the wood that adorns the overhead and the leather-wrapped, ebony-framed door, as well as the base of the berth. But take a closer look at the drawers. They're wedge-shaped, angled outboard as they get closer to the sole. No need to be concerned about lack of stowage, as there's plenty of room for clothes. You're also in for nice surprises in the head. First, the foot of the bed faces the head's central feature, the shower and tub, though they're concealed by privacy panels of onyx adhered to glass. The berth also faces an adjacent dressing area, to port. Northcoast purposely didn't wall off or compartmentalize these areas, keeping the master open and flowing. Second, the tub, fitted with jets and crafted of marble, is sunken and crowned by a skylight.

There are a handful of other unexpected decorative features aboard the 125, such as lighting beneath cabinetry toe-kicks in the saloon, and LED lighting on the stainless steel table legs on the flying bridge. Even the steering wheel in the pilothouse is stylized, crafted in-house to look like that of a Ferrari. But none of these overshadow the practical features with which the Northcoast 125 is equipped. In fact, for every fun feature, there is arguably one practical facet.

Take the leather soles in the galley and pilothouse. Leather may seem a strange, even impractical, flooring material—particularly in areas with high traffic. Not in this case. Yadvish explains that the leather was treated with epoxy before its arrival at the

THE SALOON IS OPEN, WITH VIEWS THAT REMAIN UNOBSTRUCTED, THANKS TO THE FORWARD POSITIONING OF THE ENTERTAINMENT AREA. THE LUXURY MEDIA CENTER FEATURES ROSEWOOD AND LEATHER-WRAPPED PANELS AND A 60-INCH BULKHEAD-MOUNTED FLATSCREEN TELEVISION.

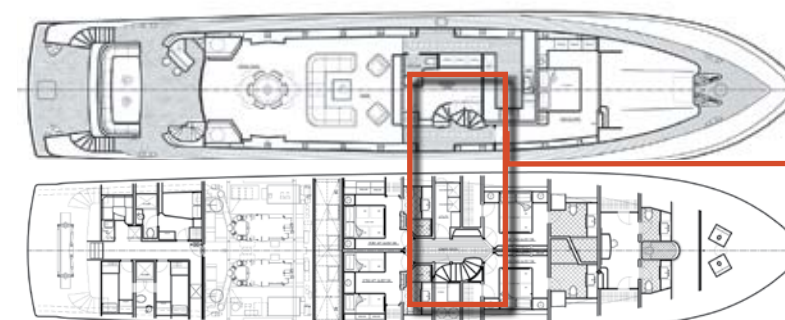


NEIL RABINOWITZ



LOA: 125'6"
BEAM: 25'5"
DRAFT: 6'3"
DISPL.: 397,000 lb.
FUEL: 7,800 gal.
WATER: 1,000 gal.
ENGINES: 2 x 1,925-hp Caterpillar C32 ACERT diesels
BASE PRICE: \$22,220,000

A BERTH WITH A LEATHER-WRAPPED FRAME (BELOW LEFT) AND THE SALOON'S AFT DINING AREA (BELOW RIGHT) ARE SPECIAL TOUCHES.



CURVING STAIRS ARE SUPPORTED BY CABLES UNDER TENSION AND EVOKE THE RIGGING OF SAILING SHIPS.

Yadvish says can feed one gallon per second, supplies the three fuel tanks, two of which are forward, to manage trim. Keeping in mind that the buyer might want to cruise beyond North American shores, Northcoast supplied the 125 with an Atlas Marine Systems 60 to 50 Hz converter.

To ease service to the four staterooms, I would have preferred to see Northcoast supply the stews with direct access from the crew area, belowdecks, to the guest

shipyard to resist scratches and dents. The process does not stiffen the leather, however, so it remains comfortable underfoot.

The captain and crew, along with the owner, can remain secure in the knowledge that if something goes wrong with the navigation or communication equipment in the pilothouse, the connections are easily accessible. The 125's helm contains a handful of Hatteland display screens, in keeping with the growing glass-bridge trend. The helm console lifts hydraulically to yield access to the wiring, which is protected by an acrylic cover. It is amongst the best organized and most neatly run I have seen.

The engineroom is also well organized. There's full walkaround access for the 12-cylinder Caterpillar C32 ACERT engines, which permit a reported 22-knot top end. A fuel-transfer system, which

area. However, the yard did provide them with something that other builders—and owners—may well want to copy. There's a dedicated washer/dryer room to port in the guest foyer. An equally good touch, the door to it is so well hidden that guests entering the pantry (complete with wine chiller) opposite will never know it exists.

It's safe to say that most buyers don't anticipate a spec yacht to incorporate so many unique, "custom" elements. But for Yadvish, it was important that Northcoast go out on a design limb. "This is for a guy who wants a Bentley...who wants something exotic and to stand out," he says.

With this build, it will be tough for Northcoast to hide its light under a bushel, too. □

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