

BOAT

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PASSION rises like a phoenix

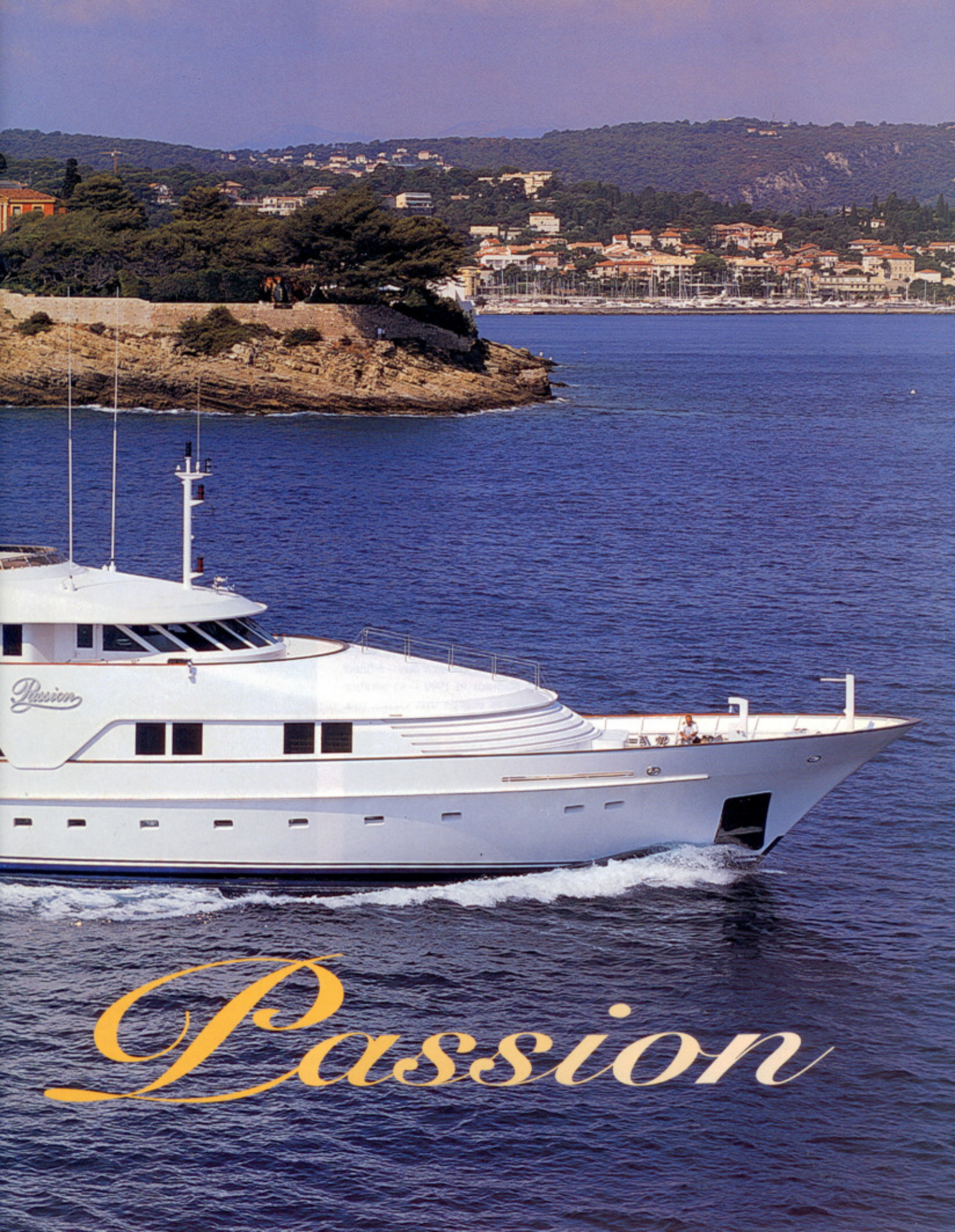
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INTERNATIONAL





Passion

When a series of accidents left this yacht in need of attention, her new owners came to the rescue. With a lot of love and an attentive team of experts, she has risen to glory as a first class luxury yacht. David Pelly steps aboard. Photography by Bugsy Gedlek



What is a new yacht? Yachts built up from hulls supplied by a contractor are common enough and the only difference in the case of *Passion* is that the basic hull was not new. Virtually everything else aboard is, however, and the classification society, Bureau Veritas, quite rightly treated her as a new build rather than a refit.

This 53 metre motor yacht began life as *Destiny* – later *Destiny Langkawi* – and was completed by Swedeship in 1988. Very popular in the charter market, she was a first class yacht until she was hit by a run of bad luck. She suffered a serious slipway accident and while lying alongside awaiting repair was struck by a tugboat, causing further damage to the hull. Following these incidents, she was acquired by new owners who decided to give her a total rebuild from bare metal. The main contract was awarded to Astilleros de Mallorca, the well-known Palma-based yard which had not, in theory at least, built new yachts since 1984.

The new husband and wife owners quickly made a number of key decisions, the first of which was to appoint ex-Royal Navy engineer Phil Ratcliffe as owner's agent. He followed the whole build programme from day one and went on to become the chief engineer. In the past, the owners had chartered, and much enjoyed, the motor yacht *Jamaica Bay* – refitted by Astilleros de Mallorca in 1999 – so another early decision was to engage that yacht's refit



designer, Felix Buytendijk. He, in turn, proposed some of the contractors who had been involved with this refit, including joinery contractor de Ruiter, which was responsible for the superb all-mahogany interior.

A third decision was that *Passion* would be used as a commercial yacht with a layout designed to have maximum appeal for the charter guest. At the same time, she had to be a family yacht that would attract the younger guests and therefore definitely could not be a floating palace in which children were not allowed to touch anything. It followed that full MCA certification would be required in addition to the Bureau Veritas classification. This called for some major engineering work, including the



The main deck areas have something to suit all guests. There is a comfortable and elegant seating arrangement in the saloon with a relaxed atmosphere, a formal dining room that accommodates up to 12 guests around the walnut burl table, and a sociable aft deck, which is extremely popular amongst guests who enjoy dining alfresco



navigation systems that could not have been imagined in 1988. Even quite recently it was considered a luxury for a yacht to be able to access the internet via satellite. *Passion* is fitted with the latest Inmarsat system, which transfers data at 512kb per second – faster than most shore-based broadband connections. Every stateroom is fitted with a flat-screen television with multiple channels available via the SeaTel system, while the two saloons have pop-up plasma screens so large that the rooms can virtually become cinemas. It almost goes without saying that the bridge has an all-monitor display system in which a series of



deck areas for informal dining, sunbathing and general enjoyment of the open air. Originally, *Passion* had limited deck area open to the sky, as she carried her boats on the top deck and used a tapering aft section as a helipad. This was extended in length and width to provide space for a substantial spa pool and sunpad aft. Removal of the boats freed up a great deal of additional deck space, allowing a pair of tables to be placed where informal meals can be served under the shade of an awning. The tenders and toys are now stowed one deck lower and launched by a powerful beam crane

which slides out to either side and is neatly concealed in the deckhead when not in use. On the main deck there is a large outdoor dining table in the shade of the overhead, where it is particularly pleasant to take a leisurely meal when the yacht is at anchor and activity is focused around the bathing platform. When moored stern-to, the sun deck offers greater privacy for alfresco dining.

Thanks to her beamy hull and long superstructure, *Passion* has a great deal of internal volume which has been used to maximum effect to produce a layout with many

daylight viewable screens can be used to show charts, radar pictures, engine monitoring, closed-circuit television and a plethora of other information. This whole complex outfit was planned and installed by the Palma-based E Cubed Systems with considerable support from Imtech. In fact, the internet played a major role in the creation of the yacht, as the owners were not able to visit Palma very often and relied heavily on the plans, sketches, photographs and schedules that continually flashed across the Atlantic to help them to make decisions.

Another recent development on yachts is that much greater use is being made of external





advantages both as a private and commercial yacht. A common drawback is to have one magnificent owners suite plus a series of much smaller staterooms for the remaining guests. *Passion* is large enough to house two very spacious VIPs in addition to the owners suite – an arrangement that is likely to be much more acceptable when there is more than one family aboard, especially if the cost of the holiday is being spread between them.

Passion actually has one more stateroom than necessary to accommodate the maximum permitted 12 guests, so one of them has been fitted out as a well-equipped gymnasium. It can also be used to accommodate a single passenger, such as a member of staff, as it has

a Pullman berth and full en suite shower/steam room.

The owners suite is in a traditional position forward on the main deck, reached from the entrance hall via a long, narrow study. The stateroom is extremely spacious with a comfortable seating area to port of the central king-sized bed. Large windows on either side provide plenty of light and are not overlooked, as the superstructure is full width at this point. The elegant marble bathroom can be reached from either side via dressing rooms flanked by wardrobes and drawers. In addition to a large bath tub with water jets, there are twin washbasins set into a marble counter and a separate oversized shower compartment.



One of the VIP staterooms is just aft of the owners suite, set in the angle between it and the study. Although smaller, this stateroom is still spacious and has the same large windows on one side. On the opposite side, sliding doors open into a very attractive en suite green marble bathroom with a luxurious tub.

The other VIP is aft on the lower deck at the end of the central corridor that accesses the remaining guest staterooms. It is very spacious because it runs right across the hull. The one on the main deck enjoys more daylight, but this one is a little larger and has the same generous bathroom behind sliding doors. The three remaining staterooms are smaller but are still



bigger than those found on many comparable yachts. One is a compact double with a nice bathroom that includes a full-sized tub, while the others are twin-bedded rooms with en suite shower rooms. All have comprehensive entertainment systems and internet facilities.

The owners say that they were aiming for a casually elegant interior. The elegance is provided by Buytendijk's quite formal structure of raised-and-fielded panelling, superbly made by de Ruiter in colour and grain-matched mahogany. The more casual feel is seen in the relaxed and homely soft furnishings selected by Arleen Dvorine of Dvorine Associates. Rather than extravagant sculptured carpets, Dvorine

chose hard-wearing cords for the main spaces and the wisdom of this choice will easily be seen after a few dozen children have galloped across them.

One place the children will definitely be galloping to is the upper saloon, which has been made the principal fun area, featuring a full-sized air hockey table in addition to three sophisticated arcade machines. 'You can't put an air hockey table there!', the owners were told. 'We just did!' they responded, and this addition has proved to be a huge success, with children of all ages sneaking upstairs to try it. That includes any guest who may have difficulty with stairs, as the main stairway is

The owners suite enjoys a position forward on the main deck and is accessed via a private study. Adorned in mahogany, the bedroom is sumptuous and elegant, while the marble-clad bathroom, entered either side by the walk-through dressing rooms, is extremely palatial. For the weight conscious there is even a gym on board



fitted with a stair-lift that is surprisingly unobtrusive and can be removed and packed away when not required. In fact, the whole of the main and upper decks are wheelchair negotiable. The aft part of the upper saloon is more traditional, with comfortable settees grouped around tables, but is often likely to be used as a cinema with the giant plasma screen, surround-sound and a huge library of DVDs.

The main deck saloon is also divided into two. The forward portion holds the formal dining room with up to 12 seats around the burl walnut table. This is served by the main galley, just forward. However, most guests prefer to dine in the open air of the aft deck if the weather is suitable. In this case, to make life easier for the crew and cut down on the number of journeys between the galley and the aft deck, a ladder has been fitted in a passageway between the two. The aft section of the saloon is a very comfortable lounge with a square of seating that is just the right size to make conversation flow easily. Behind that sits a table and chairs which are often used for board games and jigsaw puzzles.

Charter guests had better be active, because *Passion* carries so much watersports equipment it would be a crime not to use it. Diving, snorkelling, sailing, waterskiing, jet-skiing, knee-boarding, surfing, kayaking, windsurfing, wakeboarding, fishing, water trampolining, the list goes on. No doubt, as soon as someone invents another leisure activity in the sea, *Passion* will be the first customer.

She is a very substantial vessel and her captain poured scorn on the notion of shipping her across the Atlantic. A couple of Mediterranean storms have already given the crew complete confidence in her seakeeping and she has easily enough range to cross the Pond at 14 knots. Her theoretical top speed of 16 knots is unlikely to be used too often,

especially as the fuel consumption leaps up from 286 litres per hour at 12 knots to 391 litres per hour at full speed. Since 12 knots will transport guests about 160 kilometres between dinner and breakfast – what is the rush?

The yacht's name is explained by the fact that the notion of approaching whatever one does with passion is paramount to the owners, who are convinced that only those who approach their undertakings in this spirit can achieve greatness. *Passion* seems to be one of those yachts with everything. She looks good, is supremely comfortable, has up-to-the-minute equipment, appeals to young and old, carries a huge selection of sports equipment and is poised to go anywhere. The owners, designers, rebuilders and a host of contractors have certainly done a passionate job in bringing this 'new-old' project to a triumphant conclusion. □

PASSION

LOA

52.75m

LWL

47.55m

Beam

9.1m

Draught

3m

Displacement

500 tonnes

Main engines

2 x Caterpillar 3516 DI-TA,
1,710hp

Generators

2 x Caterpillar 160kW +
1 x Caterpillar 85kW

Fuel capacity

82,300 litres

Fresh water capacity

22,000 litres

Speed (max)

16 knots

Range at 14 knots

3,500nm

Air conditioning

Novenco

Water treatment

Hamman

Electrical installation

Imtech

Electronics

E Cubed Systems

Crane

Jacht-Tech

Tenders

Novurania

Exterior woodwork

Modesty

Stainless steel

K & M

Paint

Pinmar

Interior woodwork

de Ruiter

Soft furnishings

Told Nautic

Interior decoration

Dvorine Associates

Design

Felix Buytendijk

Design

Construction

Steel hull, aluminium
superstructure

Naval architecture

Diana Yacht Design

Classification

Bureau Veritas DNV 1A1

MCA compliant

Re-builder

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