

RIO RITA

Admirable refit accumulates allure

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Style and personality are the greatest features of a grand old lady. Refitting a ship like "Rio Rita", coming of age but forever a very classy yacht, can only be the work of admirers who put love in their craftsmanship. Lines and exterior styling have to be kept intact, preferably even elucidating them in the process of lengthening and modernising the yacht.

text: Infostroom / Hans Buitelaar

“Rio Rita” came to the Amels dry dock under guidance of a dedicated crew. Being aboard this super yacht for a long time already, crew have come to love the ship, and - almost acting like they were the owners - were protecting its aristocrat looks from damage by the update that was suggested in the refit-brief. The whole refit project had a really tight time table, so the crew were doing regular wintertime maintenance jobs while “Rio Rita” was seriously being refitted at the yard in Vlissingen.

Succeeding at the impossible

Amels project manager Piet Alblas looks back to a very successful project, that led to the delivery of the yacht right on time at July 1st last year, exactly meeting the wish of the owner. “Really special for a project of this size, was the fact that we left not one remaining point of attention. Literally everything was finished at the date of delivery. The technicians at Amels have worked together with the crew in an exceptional way, operating at such professional level that mutual respect has led to new friendships.” ‘Rio Rita’ came to the yard at November 24th, 2004, and was finished exactly seven months later. In this time, a Jacuzzi was installed at the sundeck, the old stern was cut off the hull and a new, longer aft part of the ship was fitted. The new stern features a swimming platform and space for a lazarette. Extra lighting was fitted on decks and the exterior, including under water lighting. After this refit, illumination is a grace ‘Rio Rita’ sparkles stronger than ever before.

Designed by Diana Yacht Design, ‘Rio Rita’ was originally built at De Vries Feadship and launched in 1984. This 55 meter twin screw displacement yacht has in the last 22 years become well-known as an example of an exquisite balance between classic and modern styling.

Initially, Amels did not compete to get the order for the refit of ‘Rio Rita’. The owner and captain were looking for a very fast refit and schedule too little time to finish the project properly, according to Amels. Having seen the first bids, the owner and captain came back to Amels, asking how much time the yard thought they needed to do this project. Agreement was reached for seven months.

The project started with a trial cruise to see in what state the yacht was, technically. It appeared the drive shaft for the propellers was outcentered, and form and weight of the starboard and portside hull were not the same. These problems had to be overcome during the refit. But even for the lengthening of the hull and installation of the Jacuzzi, time schedule was tight. Outlining the propeller shaft and balancing the ship had to be fit in the schedule as new tasks for the Amels technicians.

Increased performance

Diana Yacht Design composed a refit plan, designing a beautiful incorporation of the new exterior elements in the existing styling. As the same design-office drew the lines for ‘Rio Rita’ in its original form, it was a logical choice to get them for the design of the refit as well. Technicians at Amels consulted the design team to make all modifications to the hull technically possible. A special project for the naval architects was to make the extended stern corresponding to the lines of the underwater hull. This part had to be installed in such a way that the line of the underwater ship would stretch, rather than bend. Naturally, the original hull, measuring 52 meters, had a nicely curved under water form with smooth curves toward the stern. It has been a true piece of craftsmanship to make the hull extension, maintaining these smooth lines. “If you wouldn’t know



‘Rio Rita’ was refitted, one couldn’t see where the old part ends and the new begins,” Alblas adds smiling. A good design of the swimming platform at the new stern was necessary so the yacht would keep good performance at seas rolling in from behind. Also the extra length should not be of negative influence towards the manoeuvrability. The result of the hull extension is that ‘Rio Rita’ goes faster and makes shorter turns.

In the lengthened stern, both a stern anchor and a rockline are installed. Anchoring not from the bow but from the stern can provide some more comfort and privacy. The rockline is a very strong looped line that the crew can lay out around a piece of rock underwater, specially suited for the rocky sea bottom around the Greek islands. The experienced crew, having been sailing the Greek waters for long years already, know a lot of places that other ships can not take anchorage at, profiting from the use of the rockline and thus providing privacy for the owner.

An hydraulic passerelle was installed, sliding out of a box at the new stern. To get enough length, the box covering the sliding passageway, had to be channelled through the watersports house and into the guest cabins, where it forms a particular rectangular volume beneath the ceiling.

At the sundeck, a Jacuzzi was installed. At the bridgedeck, new cranes were installed to lift the tenders. The new types of cranes are much more reliable and operate with much less noise. A new firefighting system was installed, meeting newest industry standards and of course MCA-regulations.

Very little was changed to the interior. As a new switchboard was installed, some new parts of electrical equipment have been installed in the main switchboard with it.

Peoples’ project

“This project was mostly special because of the special way people worked together.,” says Alblas. In too short a period, the regular wintertime maintenance had to be done, while the stern had to be cut off and replaced, a lot of welding was necessary for that and for the installation of the Jacuzzi, and most of all: the whole exterior had to be painted high-gloss, without a mark of dust. All of this was going on at the same time. Alblas: “Normally, yards protect themselves from too much interference from the crew. One runs into all kinds of problems, like two professionals that need a crane at the same time. In this project, we started out by getting all dedicated together to deliver a beautiful refit and work together in good understanding to achieve that. This dedication resulted in an unseen flexibility from both teams. The crew got temporary housing in Vlissingen and liked the town a lot. It was fun having them around, and helpful, too. Lots of things were not worked out to detail, the crew was able to make on-site decisions about how to make certain things work on board. This turned out to be a great time-saver: technicians could get immediate information from the captain or crew and continue their work, rather than to wait for ‘formal’ information.”

Builder refit:	Amels the Netherlands
Design & naval architecture:	Diana Yacht Design (launch 1984 and refit 2005)
Builder 1984:	De Vries Feadship
Interior design:	Terence Disdale

The fast and thorough way this refit was done, is for a large part due to the fact that Amels provided dry dock 2, the big hall in which the Koninklijke Schelde Group mostly builds frigates for Royal Dutch Navy. Alblas: "In the climate- controlled surroundings of this hangar, we could work in the right way at this project. To get the painting done in the right way, we built partial cocoons around the ship, isolating the parts of the hull that were being painted from the dust at other parts, where welding, carpeting, cutting of metal and other activities were going on."

The unique collaboration made the refit into an enjoyable project for both crew and technicians at Amels. "Crew set sail from Vlissingen with tear shed eyes," Alblas recalls. 'Rio Rita' has set sail for the Mediterranean, where the owner, an internationally known high-society lady from Greece, will dwell in Monaco during winter-time, to go island-hopping in Greece during the summer.

Subcontractors and suppliers of equipment fitted on board the 'Rio Rita'
(partial list)

- Alfa Laval Benelux**, Breda : fuel oil separator
- AON Hudig**, Rotterdam : insurance
- Atlas Copco Ketting Marine Center**, IJmuiden : air compressors
- Besto**, Meppel : lifejackets
- Cramm Engineering**, Leeuwarden : electric-hydraulic boat crane & davits
- DESMI K&R Pompen**, Utrecht : pumps
- Dolderman**, Dordrecht : Hatz fifi engine
- Edaircon**, Rotterdam : Sea Recovery reverse osmosis watermaker
- Euro Offshore**, Werkendam : Novamarine rescue boat;
- Free Technics**, Hazerswoude : Microphor toilet system
- HCG**, Leiden : anchors
- Imtech Marine & Offshore**, Rotterdam : electrical installation & systems
- Leroy-Somer**, Soesterberg : bowthruster motor
- MAN Rollo**, Zoetermeer : Racor fuel filters; DVZ oil water separation

- Marin Assist**, Rotterdam : liferafts
- MarQuipt**, Pompano Beach, USA : side stairs
- McMurdo Ltd**, Portsmouth (UK) : Pains-Wessex rocket line launching; smoke & light buoys
- Nicoverken Marine Services**, Schiedam : Hamann sewage treatment system
- Oost / Hoogovens Handel**, IJmuiden : shafts
- Pon Power**, Papendrecht : Caterpillar main engines
- Reintjes Benelux**, Antwerpen (B) : Reintjes reduction gearbox
- Rolls-Royce Marine Benelux**, Pernis RT : Tenford steering gear & rudder angle indicator
- Snijder Filtertechniek**, Hasselt : Separ fuel filters / water separators
- Speck Pompen**, Zevenaar : emergency FIFi pump
- Technoship**, Apeldoorn : Steen deck machinery
- Volvo Penta Europe**, Beesd : generator sets
- Voorden, Van, Zaltbommel** : propellers
- VT Naiad Marine UK,UK** : stabilizers

Principal Particulars:

3-deck twin screw motoryacht of steel hull and aluminium superstructure
 Length over all: 55.50 m.
 Beam 9.10 m.
 Draft 2.80 m.
 Displacement: 519 t. (half load)

Power plant

Main Engines 2 x Caterpillar 3512 DE TA
 1055 hp @ 1600 RPM Generators 2 x Volvo Penta TD-100 AHC driving Barbour Coleman Generators 135 kva /108 kW

Tank Capacity

Fuel 78.800 liters
 Fresh water 18.800 liters
 Lubrication Oil 1.580 liters
 Grey water 1.850 liters forward tank
 1.600 liters aft tank
 Black water 1.850 liters forward tank
 1.600 liters aft tank

Performance

maximum speed: 15 knots
 cruising speed: 13 knots
 range at cruising speed: 3.645 nM.

