



# ISLAND TIME

*Great things can come in small packages, as Gabrielle Lazaridis discovers on board a 26-metre newcomer from St-Barth Yachts that's a treasure trove of surprises*

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The founder of St-Barth Yachts couldn't find what he was looking for in anything already on the market. So, like any practiced entrepreneur, he decided to make it himself. "When I told my family I was going to build my own boat, my daughters both thought I'd gone insane," Frank Bart recounts with a wry smile. His wife, Daniëlle Woudstra, was also a bit daunted by the prospect, but says she was ultimately brought on board by her husband's surefire attitude.

The dream started with the St-Barth 75 and later expanded to include the new 26-metre St-Barth 85 Fly. Standing on the aft deck of the St-Barth 85 Fly at her premiere in Palma, the Dutch duo faces down a throng of eager-eared journalists, pens in hand. It's always exciting when something new comes to market, but with the proliferation of entry-level product nowadays, it's becoming increasingly challenging for any one of them to make significant headway. Bart and Woudstra, however, show no such qualms.

You'd almost think the couple would feel less assured, having made the jump from a five-metre heritage Feadship to full-blown superyacht in one fell swoop. "We knew what we were looking for from all of the boats we saw at the shows, and Bart has been in high-end construction for 25 years, so he knows how to build luxury products," says Woudstra. The couple also leaned into their

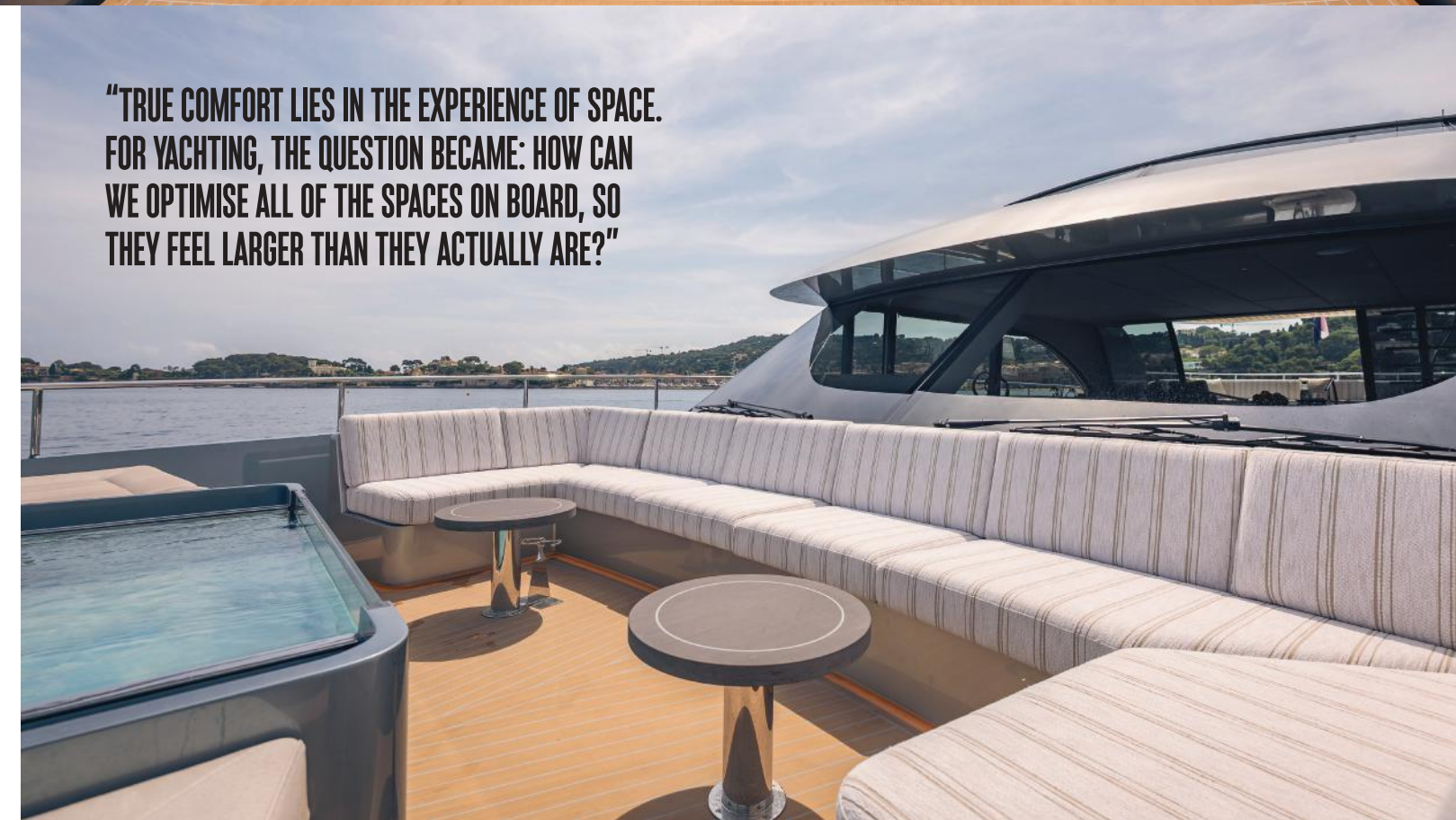


*Sunning opportunities abound on this 28-knot boat, with ample sunbeds on the flybridge and upper deck aft as well as surrounding the spa pool on the foredeck*



*Deviating from the norm, the 85 Fly's lowest level is deemed the main deck, which allows guests to go directly from the boarding platform into the saloon. Bottom, left and right: the foredeck hosts a generous alfresco lounge with a glass-fronted spa pool*

**"TRUE COMFORT LIES IN THE EXPERIENCE OF SPACE. FOR YACHTING, THE QUESTION BECAME: HOW CAN WE OPTIMISE ALL OF THE SPACES ON BOARD, SO THEY FEEL LARGER THAN THEY ACTUALLY ARE?"**



experience opening their own wellness resort in the Netherlands, which offered insight into the lifestyle aspect. "True comfort lies in the experience of space," says Bart. "For yachting especially, the question became: How can we optimise all of the spaces on board, so they feel larger than they actually are?"

Armed with the initial concept, Bart and Woudstra assembled an all-Dutch team to help breathe life into the project, which would become the brand's original 24-metre St-Barth 75 yacht. "AR Design helped us with translating the image in Bart's mind into a 2D design," Woudstra says. "This provided a base, but when you want to go further, you need 3D illustrations and a naval architect. That's where Wijk Yacht Creation stepped in." The Netherlands-based group eventually landed on a muscular frame with a long, uninterrupted sheer line for maximum volume, while dark glazing and metal detailing help preserve a lean profile.

"We managed to ensure that the enormous amount of space on board didn't affect the sleek design of the yacht," says Tom Kohlmann, who was a designer and engineer at Wijk Yacht Creation during the design phases of the St-Barth 78 and 85 Fly. As for the hull's signature blue, Woudstra says the couple wanted their yacht to stand out against neighbouring vessels, but also to appear more harmonious with the sea. The entire design process was completed in just six months,





at which point the yacht began construction at a local shipyard in Enkhuizen, north of Amsterdam.

After taking delivery, the couple brought their completed yacht to the Cannes Yachting Festival, where it debuted to unexpected fanfare. Any pretence of a one-off project shattered amid the stream of inquiries at the show, which spurred the creation of St-Barth Yachts as a commercial enterprise. "The single, overwhelming piece of feedback we received was that people loved the design but were missing space for a crew," Bart says. "We created the 75 to operate by ourselves but wanted to create an option for owners looking to fully relax while on board."

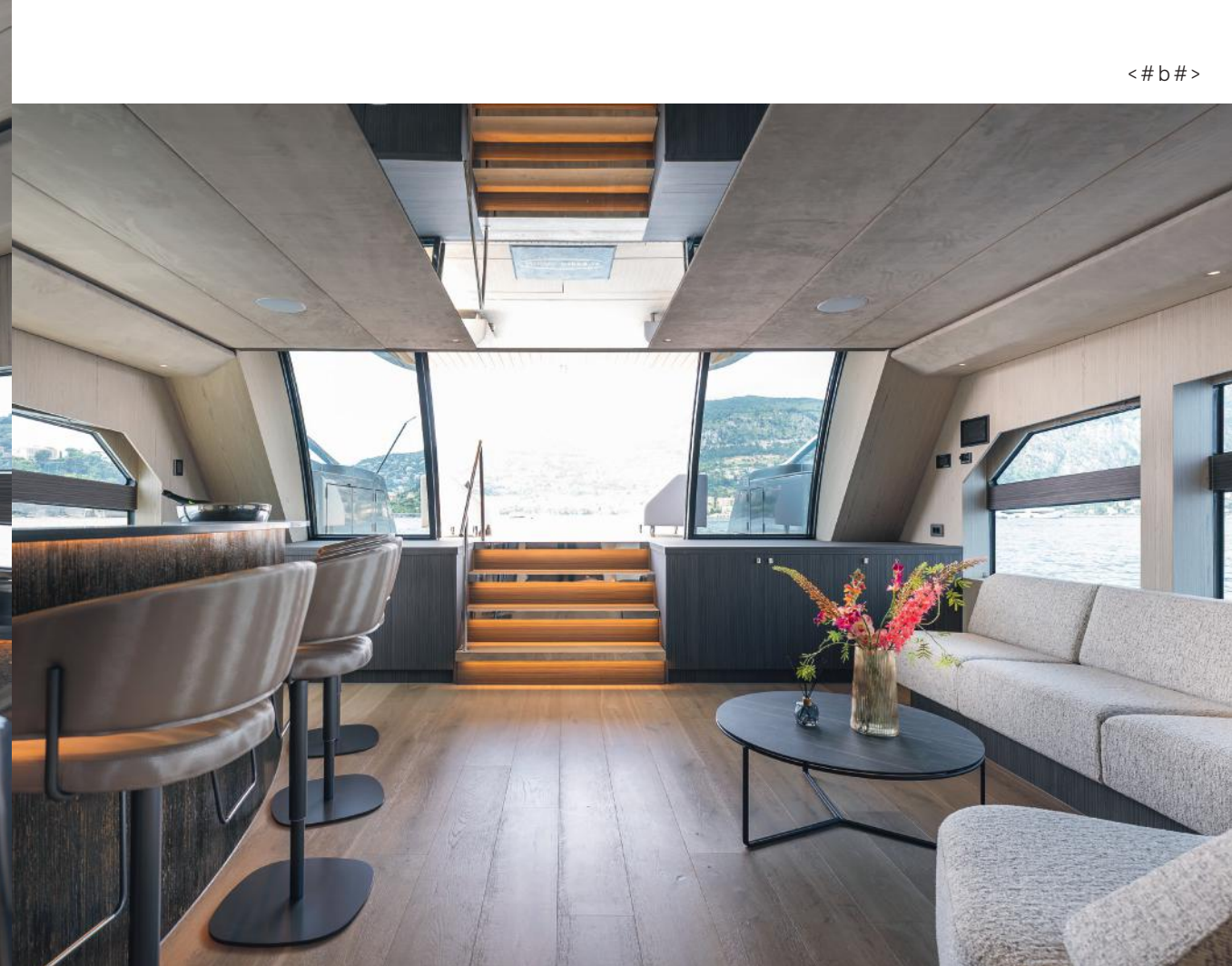
The additional crew requirement lengthened the yard's follow-up instalment from 24 to 26 metres, crowned by an expansive new flybridge with an extra helm station. "We didn't want to go too much bigger because then you start running into restrictions in popular anchorages, such as in France," says Bart, though he strived to pack on amenities that would "make you feel like you are on a 30-metre superyacht". But even at 30 metres you'd struggle to find some of the features afforded to the 85 Fly. Top of mind is the generous spa pool perched on the bow, adorned in blue ceramic tiling. To the untrained eye, the polished surface presents as a crystalline quartz with sinuous veins reminiscent of marble, showcased through an elegant glass front.

The surprises continue inside, essentially from the moment guests step down from the beach club into the awaiting lounge. The space is made bright and welcoming thanks to a panoply of warm

**"WHEN I TOLD MY FAMILY I WAS GOING TO BUILD MY OWN BOAT, MY DAUGHTERS BOTH THOUGHT I'D GONE INSANE"**



*The principal interior dining area and galley are found on the bridge deck. An open-plan layout allows the captain and guests to interact when the yacht is underway. Top: aft on this level is a lounge that's sheltered from the sun*



*With the owner's cabin just forward of the saloon, the entire area can become a private apartment if desired. While minimalist design prevails, standout pieces like the liquid-metal bar add interest to the decor*

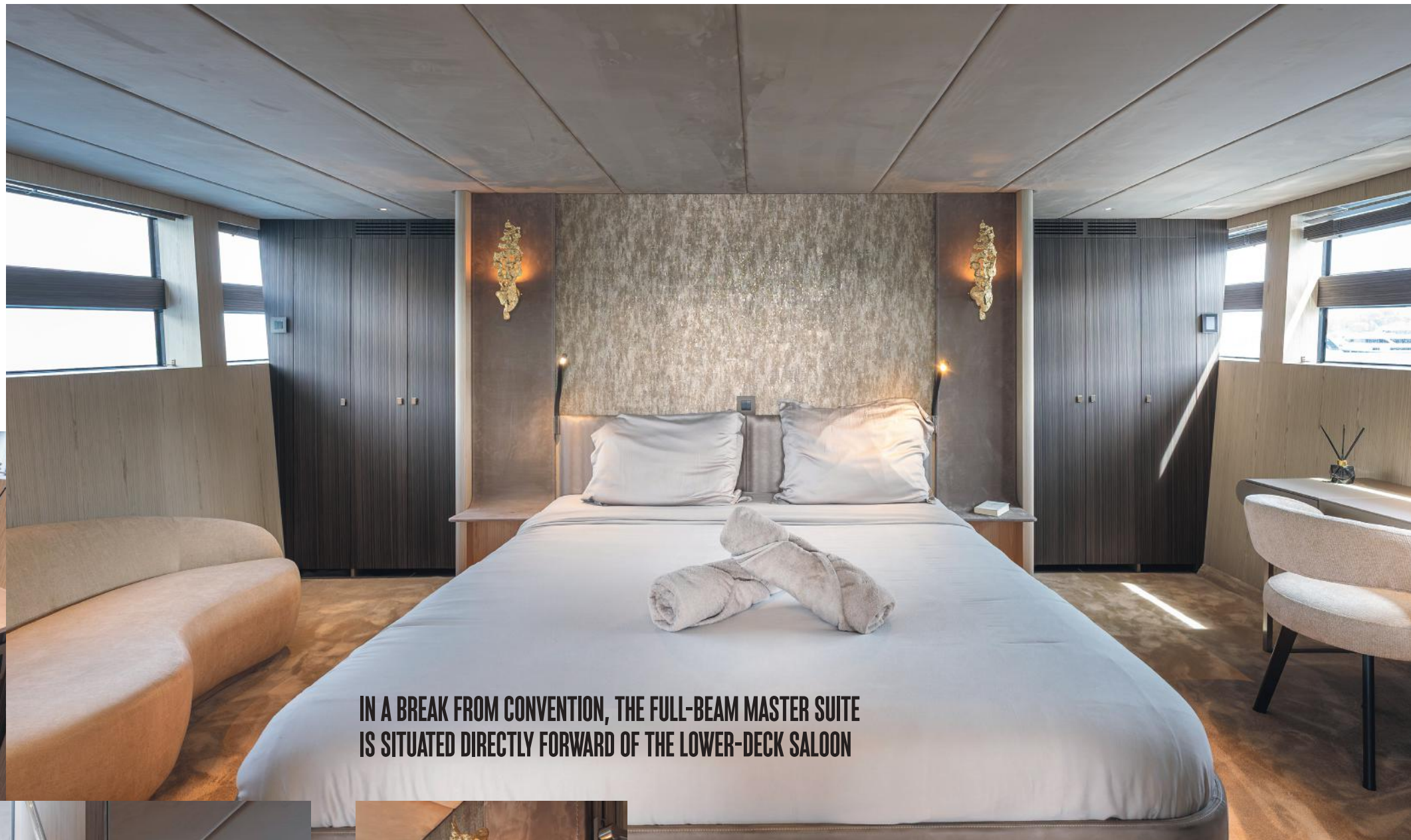
**"WE WANTED TO HAVE SEVERAL PLACES WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY OR BE ON YOUR OWN"**

woods and large wrap-around windows, but the real showstopper is the full-size bar to starboard that looks to be dripping metal. It's a production technique honed specifically for the new model by a local Dutch artist, with rich gold undertones catching in the light. The effect is rather sumptuous, and yet any over-the-top feelings of grandeur are tempered by the otherwise minimalist design. A curved sofa directly opposite, covered in white-and-grey-flecked upholstery, only adds to the convivial atmosphere, with a small dayhead neatly tucked away in the corner.

In a break from convention, the full-beam master suite is situated directly forward of the lower deck saloon. "I like the use of the different spaces on board," says Kohlmann. "Frank [Bart] has quite a unique approach to solving problems." The rooms can be partitioned by a set of double doors, though leaving them open effectively creates a private owner's apartment with direct access to the aft deck - perfect for a morning dip. The remaining guest cabins (two VIPs and one further double) are found in the forward section next to the crew quarters, which can be swapped out for an additional guest accommodation should an owner-operator prefer to forgo crew.

One design motif worth mentioning appears in each of the guest bathrooms, where the sink has been carved into a reverse silhouette of the





**IN A BREAK FROM CONVENTION, THE FULL-BEAM MASTER SUITE IS SITUATED DIRECTLY FORWARD OF THE LOWER-DECK SALOON**

island of St Barths. It seems a nice tribute to the yard's namesake, even if the connection between the Caribbean and a brand hailing from the Netherlands isn't necessarily obvious - a point Bart addresses during the tour. "My second name is Bart, and Woudstra is from [the Dutch province of] Sint Maarten in Holland, so we fashioned the two components into a hybrid moniker that also lends itself to yachting," he explains.

Scampering up the staircase, the yacht opens into a bright, apartment-style main saloon with a fully equipped galley off to one side (the island sporting the same liquid metal finish as the bar) and a formal dining table on the other. "We wanted to have several places where you can enjoy with friends and family or be on your own," Woudstra says, directing our attention to a cosy-looking daybed just aft of the formal dining table. If she isn't lounging in the spa bath, you can often find her here curled up with a book during the day or a drink in the evenings to unwind. Bart, on the other hand, prefers spending his time at the forward helm station, fitted with a full suite of Garmin displays for navigation and system management and a joystick for the IPS drives. "I like that I can be with my guests even when I'm driving," he muses, with guests often lounging on the adjacent couch during cruises. Powered by a pair of Volvo Penta 1350 IPS engines, the 85 Fly can summon market-topping speeds of up to 28 knots with Sleipner Vector Fins to keep the ride stable.

Despite its Caribbean-inspired name, St-Barth Yachts are very clearly earmarked as a product of the Netherlands. Evidence of the Dutch design philosophy comes through in the understated yet playful interiors, but perhaps even more strongly in the myriad amenities discovered throughout.



*Left: the three guest cabins forward on the main deck have a separate stairwell to the master cabin (top). Opposite page, centre: the en suite sink basins are a reverse relief map of the island of St Barths*



## SERIOUSLY STREAMLINED

Some of the innovative, storage-saving features packed into the St-Barth 85 Fly

- **Hidden anchor system** The yacht's flush-fit anchor system helps maintain a tidy profile, blending seamlessly with the near-vertical bow. Once activated, a mechanised door hinges open with the anchor raising up and lowering over the front of the yacht. While the anchor is in use, the cover comes back down to conceal the storage space and keep the yacht's streamlined appearance.
- **Concealed tender storage** Beneath the beach club is room for a 3.6-metre tender, accessible at the touch of a button. There's also no need to move the two daybeds, which remain securely fastened when the hatch is lifted. The tender is hidden next to a dedicated crane for easy deployment, with the latter component also controlled by a set of "up" and "down" push buttons.
- **Custom toy lift** Confined spaces meant the yard got creative when it came to packing away additional items, particularly in a way that guaranteed easy access. One such solution sees a custom toy lift rise to reveal and conceal a pair of Seabobs, again at the touch of a button. The on-deck placement also makes it convenient for users to grab and go when struck with a sudden urge to jump in the water.
- **Al fresco dining tables** The outdoor seating arrangement aft of the main saloon features height-adjustable tables that also move laterally towards the corners of the U-shaped sofa. The space can accommodate up to eight people and is partially shaded by the flybridge overhang. There's also a remote-controlled bimini that extends out for further shade.



"SHE'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING ELSE IN HER CLASS"

The boarding platform, for instance, can be lowered into the water, remain flush with the deck or lift into the air to serve as a passerelle. There's even space to hide a small tender under the aft deck with a crane for easy deployment (another rarity on a yacht of this size), while a dedicated toy lift stores two conveniently placed Seabobs.

Mindfulness towards the environment was also inherent to the build. The 85 Fly trades traditional teak for a more sustainable alternative from EcoDeck and repurposes engine heat to warm water used for the taps and spa bath. The couple's eco-conscious stance also factored into their decision to use aluminium, which helps lower consumption due to the material's lighter weight, while also aiding in performance – not to mention recyclability of the metal down the line, taking into consideration the full lifecycle of the yacht.

"She's completely different from anything else in her class," says Tim Carbury, the yacht's central listing agent at Moravia Yachting. And clients clearly agree, with this first hull reportedly selling in a handshake deal on the 2025 Palma boat show's opening day.

"We just gave the order for a second unit of the 85 Fly this morning," Bart enthuses. "And we've already started building another 75 yacht, but this time with a flybridge." The yard also plans to introduce an interim 78 model to its line-up, though capacity constraints mean a slight delay before the first hull in the series can enter production. "We want to keep it a boutique operation, building a maximum of two yachts per year," says Bart. His reasoning is that each client should receive a tailored experience with the opportunity to carry out further customisations if they so wish.

If a St-Barth yacht feels a bit different, that's simply because it is. The layout is unconventional, but the changes are less gimmicky and more a thoughtful evolution of how yacht owners want to live on board, with far more than you would expect enveloped into a 26-metre platform. It turns out the old axiom "if you want a thing done well, do it yourself" rings true. For Bart and Woudstra, their willingness to be the change they wished to see in the yachting market has certainly paid off. ▣



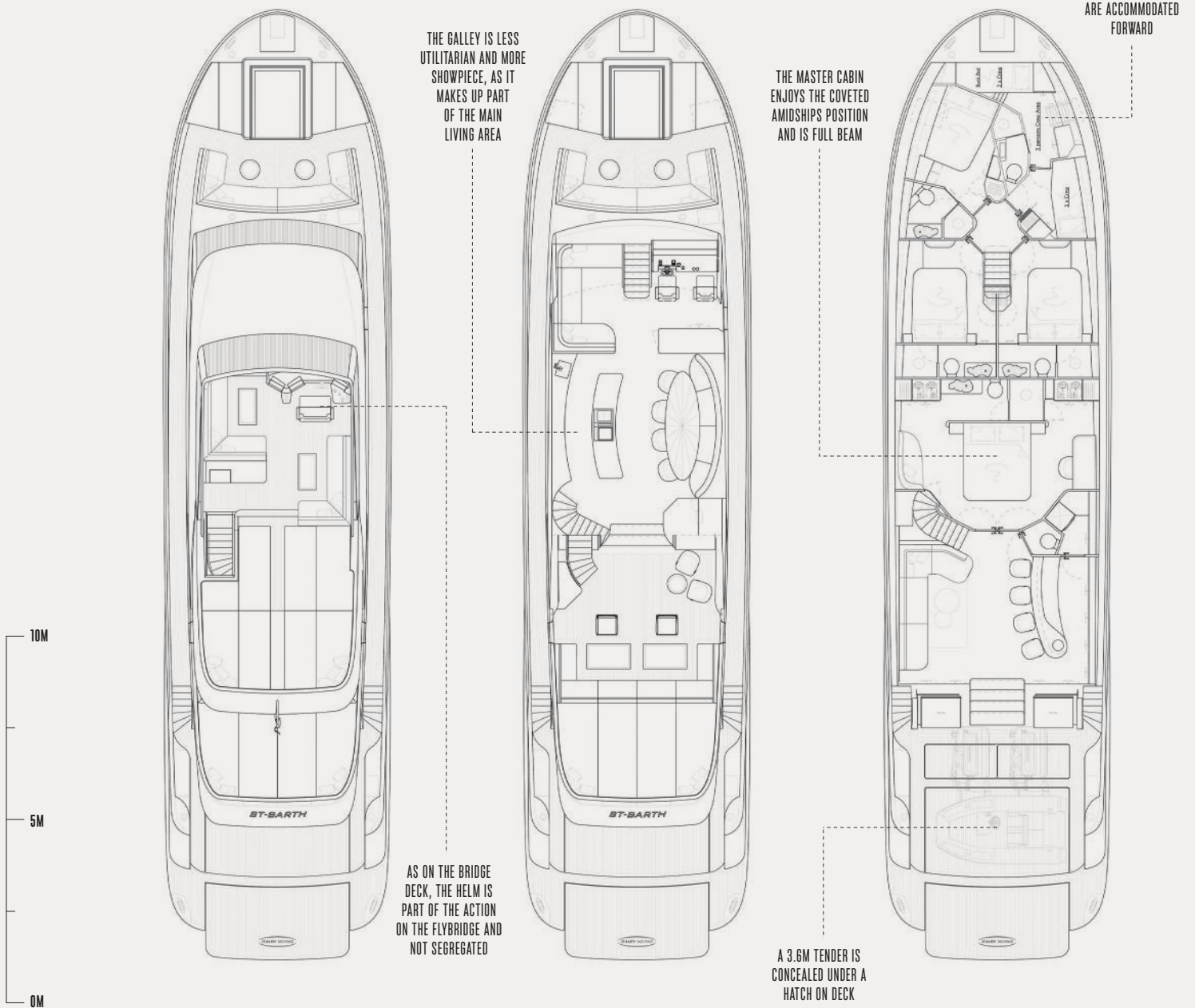
85 FLY

ST-BARTH YACHTS

FLYBRIDGE

BRIDGE DECK

MAIN DECK



LOA 26M  
 LWL 23.96M  
 BEAM 6.3M  
 DRAUGHT 1.65M  
 GROSS TONNAGE 110GT  
 ENGINES 2 X VOLVO PENTA 1350 IPS  
 GENERATOR 20KW  
 NORTHERN LIGHTS 380 V

**STABILISERS**  
 SLEIPNER VECTOR FINS  
**SPEED (MAX/CRUISE)** >25/18 KNOTS  
**RANGE AT 10 KNOTS** 1,200 NM  
**FUEL CAPACITY**  
 7,500 LITRES  
**FRESHWATER CAPACITY** 1,400 LITRES

**TENDER**  
 AGILIS CUSTOM DIESEL 360D JET TENDER  
**OWNERS/GUESTS** 8  
**CREW** 3  
**CONSTRUCTION**  
 ALUMINIUM HULL AND SUPERSTRUCTURE  
**CLASSIFICATION** CE OCEAN A

**NAVAL ARCHITECTURE**  
 WIJK YACHT CREATION  
**EXTERIOR DESIGN**  
 AR DESIGN; ST-BARTH YACHTS  
**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
 ST-BARTH YACHTS

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