

# BOAT

INTERPRENTATION

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## MALTESE FALCON

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# SEAFARIS

This unconventional custom built catamaran was developed with an experienced owner who wanted speed, volume, luxury and be capable of carrying a fishing vessel between her hulls. Roger Lean-Yercoe joins her for a cruise around Australia's Great Barrier Reef  
Photography by Karl Hofman





This page: the impressive main saloon, aft of the bridge, spans the two hulls, giving a vast elegant socialising area. Through the aft doors a tappenyakki grill offers a different and fun way of eating and socialising

**B**oarding *Seafaris* at dusk is a remarkable experience. The tender approaches the stern and noses between the catamaran's two hulls. Lines are secured, a button pressed, and the tender rises silently upwards with the new arrivals still in their seats. Then, as eye levels

rise above the main deck, an astonishing view of the yacht's warm, jarra wood-lined interior is displayed through open doors. It extends into the entrance lobby, on past striking chrysalis-like red wall-lights and

down a softly curved passageway. In the far distance, at the focal point of the scene, an eye-catching silver artwork, inspired by the cross-section of a nautilus shell, is set on the bulkhead. This is a yacht that visitors will never forget.

*Seafaris* is owned by Jeff McCloy, a property developer who is based in New South Wales, Australia. He was not only intensely involved with the yacht's concept and design but also project managed the build in concert with J R Tours Pty, his own

project management company. With a lifetime of hands-on boating behind him, he had felt the need to step up in size to a motor yacht capable of comfortable oceanic cruising, and had been impressed by the fuel efficiency, speed and volume offered by a catamaran. As a keen fisherman, he also saw the potential of carrying a 9 metre fishing tender between the hulls – a much better alternative to towing a boat of this size.

When it came to the initial design, McCloy was totally pragmatic, explaining: "There was

no need to re-invent the wheel. Well-proven catamarans were operating commercially, many of them designed and built in Australia." It made sense to ask for input from Bret Crowther, of Incat Crowther, one of the well-known sailing catamaran designers of the leading designers in this field. The son of the well-known sailing catamaran designer Lock Crowther, he has some 200 designs in operation around the world. He drew up a design and general arrangement plan for a 40 metre catamaran that would accommodate 10 guests and the same number of crew.

While the result was highly practical, it followed commercial rather than yachting aesthetics. In a late attempt to put this right, McCloy visited the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show with Andrew O'Connell, of Alis Architecture, an Irish-born architect and interior designer from Pyrmont, Australia, with whom he has worked for many years. Although O'Connell was also new to super-yachts, his sense of style, proportion and fluid lines, combined with the knowledge that he gained at Fort Lauderdale,



is page: with its highly polished, welcoming floor, the vast lower saloon, adjacent to the guest cabins, enables guests to quietly relax in a cosy sitting area or watch the massive television screen with friends



enabled him to make some late changes to the design of both the yacht's exterior lines and its interior, lifting them into the realms of the superyacht.

The hull and superstructure were built at the Hogans yard in Newcastle, New South Wales, which is conveniently close to the owner's base. When the hull and machinery installation were complete, the vessel was motored north to Brisbane for interior fitting out by FMCA, a specialist furniture maker. McCloy said: 'The voyage to Brisbane was valuable as the small problems that were revealed, inevitable in any new boat, could be rectified before the interior was installed.' The benefits of this could be seen a month after delivery, when no inaccessible defects were discovered.

Despite its unconventional creation, the yacht is spectacular. Even though O'Connell's touch was not applied until late in the build, he was able to transform the exterior looks, rounding flat surfaces, sculpting the windows, making small changes here and there, and adding a rigid Bimini and arch mast that are equal to the most stylish designs seen in any Mediterranean marina.

With the help of interior designer Mia Ward, who is also from Aliss Architecture and has a long affinity with sailing yachts, the same sense of style, talented design and high-quality craftsmanship is evident inside the vessel too. Compared with the interior layout of monohull motor yachts, which tend to follow a well-established pattern, the internal division of catamarans presents designers with a challenge – lower deck volume within the hulls is small and the superstructure affords a particularly large beam. On *SeaGaris*, the two engine rooms and crew areas totally fill the hulls, while the main deck – with the exception of a library and a cinema/television lounge – is completely devoted to four large double guest cabins and a full-beam master cabin. With the size of the guest cabins comparing favourably to those found on a monohull of 50 to 55 metres, each easily accommodates a settee, writing desk and shower room, while their large windows provide excellent light and wide views.

For chartering purposes, the master cabin, which fills the forward element of the superstructure, has a lockable wardrobe for the owner's clothes in addition to two further wardrobes, and is replete with all the luxuries of modern life, including a pop-up



plasma satellite television at the foot of the bed and a marble-lined bathroom with spa bath. A door leads forward to the open air of the foredeck, which is also accessed from a gymnasium to starboard. The spaciousness of the cabins is partly due to the absence of side decks, and while this does mean that crew must pass through either the engine room or saloon to move from foredeck to aft deck, the privacy for guests is welcome.

The bridge deck is also without side decks, thus maximising the interior volume of the main living area. Here, guests can dine in air-conditioned comfort around a



kidney-shaped table backed by a curved wall of mahogany panels, relax on a semi-circular settee or join in the camaraderie of the full-service bar. Forward, accessed through the bridge, an open-air lounging area with two inward-facing semi-circular settees is cut into the forward part of the superstructure – an ideal place to let the wind blow through your hair.

At the aft of the saloon, glass doors – manually operated to ensure serviceability in remote cruising grounds – open to provide a good visual connection to the aft deck. Like all of the teak decks, the area is caulked in

while, an effective means of keeping both the deck and guests' feet cool. This splendid space is edged with seating and has as its centrepiece a large oval dining table inset with a teppanyaki grill, one of the yacht's special features. Asian cuisine is highly popular in Australia, and the ability to watch the chef preparing ultra-fresh grilled ingredients (in *SeaGaris*' case, the seafood is usually only a couple of hours old) combines

entertainment with good, healthy food. The main galley, set to starboard of the main saloon beyond a long buffet table, has a similar feature. Guests can look through

three large open ports to watch the chef at work in his smart, well-equipped and well-lit domain. Jeff McCloy has a ready answer to the question about cooking odours filling the yacht: 'It's the trend in world-class gourmet restaurants for the dining room to be open to the kitchen. Their guests like it, and our extraction system is good enough to cope with the steam and smells – so why not?'

The yacht's other deck areas are also of the highest order. One deck aloft, accessed by an easily negotiable stairway, the sundeck offers a circular spa pool flanked by sun mattresses, a bar and a 10-seat dining table



This page: the splendid master cabin stretches across the full beam. In the bathroom a pop-up television can be viewed from the bath. Clever use of light and sculptures transforms the guest corridor



set beneath the shade of the dramatic, complex curves of the fibreglass Bimini, where it is served by a barbecue grill. Aft of this, the deck carries the water-jet-powered safety boat and launching crane while leaving plenty of room for an array of sun loungers. When the rails are lowered, a Robinson 44 helicopter can land and take off. However, now that the owner has acquired a six-seater Squirrel helicopter, the deck may be extended to accommodate it, hopefully without impairing the yacht's good looks.

On the main deck aft, the hydraulically operated platform is normally a base for the tenders, flanked by a well-equipped fishing store to starboard and a day head to port. A pair of settees provides guests with a place to don their gear or assemble before leaving the yacht. Normally, the central bay, with its hydraulic platform, is encircled by railings, but with the tenders launched, the teak-hat platform raised and the rails removed, the whole deck becomes a shaded multi-purpose area, and in one of its more interesting configurations provides an unusual dining venue. With a table set up on the platform

and lowered into the water, guests can eat with the sea washing around their ankles while surrounded by shoals of curious fish attracted by the underwater lights. Best that for a sophisticated setting!

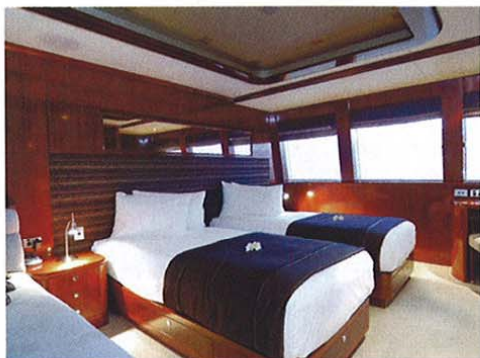
Design bywords for the technical areas were simplicity of operation, practicality, reliability and ease of maintenance. Stabilisers and bowthrusters were not fitted because the natural stability of a catamaran hull and its wide-set propellers were deemed sufficient. A 2,250hp Caterpillar 3512B diesel and a 182hp, 136kW Cummins-powered

generator occupy each of the spacious engine rooms, the one to port sandwiched between a workshop (with access to the bathing platform) and a pump room containing one of the two air-conditioning units which is enough to cool the yacht by itself. The reserve unit is in the second pump room, forward of the engine room in the starboard hull where there is also a sewage treatment plant to meet the Great Barrier Reef's stringent regulations. Aft of the starboard engine room, the diving store gives further access to the bathing platform. At full

speed, the Caterpillars drive *Seagulls* at an impressive 26 knots using conventional propellers semi-sunk into tunnels to minimise her draught at around 1.8 metres. She cruises comfortably at 18 knots. Currently configured for charter operations in the Great Barrier Reef region, her range is a relatively short 1,500 nautical miles, even at an economical speed of 12 knots, but space exists to increase the tankage, which could improve the range to 3,000 nautical miles.

The bridge is equipped mainly with sturdy Furuno gear and is totally workmanlike. The





**One of the four guest cabins – spacious and private thanks to the absence of side decks**

logical layout places navigation controls to port and engineering to starboard of the central console, and communications aft and to port on either side of a dinette-like seating area. The pleasing décor features maple, leather upholstery and a jarrah wood inlay floor. Although set in a curved frame, the flat panels of vertical glass that form the windscreen are shaded by a deep eyebrow, ensuring 180 degrees of undistorted exterior vision – essential when navigating among the hidden dangers of the Coral Sea.

The captain and the first officer have a double cabin and a twin aft of the bridge, a flexible arrangement that allows the captain to move into the twin on the rare occasions that the double is needed to accommodate an extra guest.

Although the lower deck areas for the crew are acceptable, there is scope in a future yacht of this type to make their mess more roomy by reducing the over-generous machinery spaces. As it stands, however, the four double-bunked cabins, which share two shower rooms, are pleasant enough. The laundry room, with its pair of commercial washers and dryers plus ironing and folding space, is an excellent facility worthy of a 50 metre yacht.

The creation of this world-class vessel in a non-traditional manner is a remarkable achievement by all concerned, from the design team to the shipyard, the furniture makers, project managers and every craftsman who played a part.

Compared with monohulls, catamarans offer vastly increased volume for their length but have received slow acceptance in the Mediterranean, where their large beam makes finding a berth difficult. They are ideal for operations in less congested waters, and *Seafaris* ably demonstrates the true practicality of the breed. □

SEAFARIS

<b>LOA</b>	41m	<b>Grey/black water</b>	3,000 litres	<b>Paint</b>	Sterling
<b>LWL</b>	34.6m	<b>Sewage system</b>	Hamman	<b>Construction</b>	Aluminium and composite
<b>Beam</b>	11m	<b>Fire control system</b>	Chubb sprinkler and FM200 fixed suppression	<b>Classification</b>	USL Code 2B
<b>Draught</b>	1.8m (loaded)	<b>Security systems</b>	Ness EDSR 900 CCTV	<b>Owner's project manager</b>	JR Tours Pty Ltd
<b>Displacement</b>	245 tonnes	<b>Monitoring system</b>	n/a	<b>Naval architect</b>	Incat Crowther
<b>Main engines</b>	2 x 1,678kW Caterpillar 3512B diesels	<b>Air-conditioning</b>	Coles Refrigeration and Fan Coil Industries	<b>Exterior styling</b>	Waterline Yacht Design and Incat Crowther
<b>Propellers</b>	Hendley	<b>Communication/ navigation electronics</b>	Thrane Fleet 55, Iridium, CDMA, Furuno, Bosun autopilot	<b>Interior fit-out</b>	FMCA Brisbane
<b>Speed (max/cruise)</b>	30/20 knots	<b>Entertainment systems</b>	Philips, Neotech and Sonance, OceanMedia, Panasonic	<b>Interior design/decoration</b>	Altis Architecture/Waterline Yacht Design
<b>Fuel capacity</b>	30,000 litres	<b>Owner and guests</b>	10	<b>Broker</b>	n/a
<b>Range</b>	1,500nm at 12 knots	<b>Crew</b>	10	<b>Charter</b>	Nigel Burgess UK Tel: +44 (0)20 7766 4300 E-mail: London@nigelburgess.com
<b>Bow thrusters</b>	n/a	<b>Tenders</b>	Blackwatch 28 Custom, 5.2m RIB Custom	<b>Charter rates</b>	From \$112,000 per week
<b>Trim control</b>	Interceptors	<b>Crane</b>	Besenzoni GE22	<b>Builder/year</b>	Forgacs Shipyard/2006, Newcastle, NSW, Australia
<b>Generators</b>	2 x 136kW Cummins	<b>Passerelle</b>	n/a	<b>Price guide</b>	n/a
<b>Watermakers</b>	2 x Sea Recovery Aqua Whisper, 6,000 litres per day				
<b>Freshwater capacity</b>	12,000 litres				

