

THE NEW GENERATION BECKONS

Breaking away from a popular design is not easy, especially if it is one of the most luxurious boat brands in the market. Sunseeker, now introduces its 28-metre yacht, and some bespoke facilities that can attract boat buyers.

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Photographs by Sunseeker International

The new 28-metre Yacht from Sunseeker International made its world debut at the 2012 Tullett Prebon London Boat Show in January. Soon after the company's Chairman Robert Braithwaite OBE cut the ribbon, we were among the first ones to go aboard this yacht. Our host was Ewen Foster, Head of Design at the British boat building firm. He was keen to show us what he calls the next generation look of the Sunseeker yacht.

Looks

The boat certainly breaks from the 'normal visual parameters' we are so used to seeing in boats of this builder. The most captivating element of this new design though, is the remarkable extent of main deck glazing and the lack of buttresses. The glass extends in full height running from deck-to-deck so that the structure appears pillar-less. Glazing flows continuously down the sides and around the rear of the saloon, to merge with the aft patio doors. This new wrap-around look gives the main deck accommodation a totally different and uninterrupted floor-to-ceiling appearance. It is a refreshing design style, and radically different too, resulting in an extraordinarily bright interior that seems to flow from the outside.

Main saloon

The engineering behind this change is impressive. Much of the weight of the superstructure is supported by glass and the frame around the patio doors takes a staggering six tons of compression. The overall effect is one of increased usability of the saloon, particularly for

Specifications

Length (overall)	28.15 m (92' 4")
Beam	6.50 m (21' 4")
Draft	2.13 m (6' 11")
Displacement	76,100 kg (1,67,771 lbs)
Fuel cap	9,000 l (2,378 gal)
Water cap	1,500 l (396 gal)

The main deck makes for the most entertaining area on this boat



A wide bow area has been utilised to place this seating area next to the helm station



The galley overlooks the open dining area connected to a drop down balcony

because this is adjacent to the drop-down balcony, in practise it will be used more than is normal in boats with inside dining rooms.

Cabins

Two individual stairways lead down to four equally well-appointed and spacious suites, including up to two VIP double staterooms and a full beam master stateroom. Every cabin incorporates a large window set and placed inside it, is a rather quaint porthole that opens to allow for natural ventilation.

Right forward is what in this layout is considered to be the master stateroom, but is a narrower room than the aft cabin, and has a slightly less-than-six-foot bed. It is decorated in a pleasing colour scheme of cream fabrics offset by a high-gloss walnut wood finish. To port, there is a cabin that has a double berth with the bed set athwartships and facing outboard so you wake up to a view. On the other side of the companionway, the cabin to starboard is fitted with two single bunks again set athwartships and facing inboard. Our favourite cabin is the VIP suite that, with its full beam seems to offer more space than the cabin right forward.

Crew accommodation right aft is suitable for four, young and somewhat agile crew members. The entrance to their area is from the swim platform or through the engine room. The area is well-thought-out and even finds space for a small crew galley and the ever important washing-drier combination machine.

Interior design

The internal decorations represented a



Placing the dining area in the centre of the saloon brings a refreshing change from the usual entertainment lounge

boats that choose to include the option of side doors and bulwark balcony that were fitted to this yacht.

Sitting in the saloon's large off-white, leather-covered sofas to port, or the equally ample armchair, the room feels capacious. A large pop-up TV

blocks the light to starboard, but given that TV should be used to watch movies in the evening, the loss of daylight is somewhat academic.

Forward of the saloon and to starboard opposite a small but compact open galley is the dining area, and

considerable challenge for the interior designers at Design Unlimited who typically design most of the range. Their brief from the builder and the yacht's owner required a 28-metre yacht that had the internal attributes of a considerably larger boat, at the same time, made the most of radical exterior styling. Together, these required a dramatic rethinking of the layout and installation of the internal systems, because substantial volumes of joinery that could have been used for ducting

and cabling were lost to glazing. In particular, the air-conditioning system for the saloon had to be completely reconfigured to fit within the ceiling spaces with access via drop-down panels, and on the lower deck, the provision of full-size en suite bathrooms for all the cabins demanded a complete rethink of the interior layout.

There was no single solution to creating the 'superyacht' feel, but rather an ongoing process of incremental improvements — saving

a few millimetres here, finding a more compact installation configuration there, etc. New solutions were continually devised to ensure that the desired effect was achieved without sacrificing comfort or amenities. This process was supported by exhaustive space planning and the building of a full-scale mock-up of the interior at the Sunseeker works. The latter, however, was invaluable in evaluating changes and their impact on surrounding areas as the project progressed.

Boat Review/Sunseeker 28

Finally, the interior itself had to be designed in a modular fashion, allowing certain sections such as the galley and access to and from crew quarters, to be available in different formats to allow for regional preferences without slowing down the build process. In all, it was an exhaustive process but Mark Tucker and his team at Design Unlimited are delighted with the results as indeed is the yacht's owner.

Sun deck anyone?

We liked the external social areas especially those on the foredeck with its small teak table, while the flybridge has been innovated with a new sunpad and group seating formats. The expansive foredeck has given rise to a completely new seating and sunpad layout with

a centre companionway providing increased social areas. It feels very safe when walking around this area, and this is in part due to the very high sheer line the designers have given to this boat. The result gives a more spacious and refined area.

Flybridge

Weighing less than a quarter of the GRP soft tops of other yachts this size, the large carbon fibre hard-topped flybridge deck offers unrivalled room for enjoyment with a comparable increase in available space resulting in an area that can be tailored to suit every client's needs. From spa tubs to extended sunpads, this area will have endless entertaining layouts to enjoy true al fresco dining.



Flybridge



Main deck



Lower deck

Uniqueness

This particular yacht, the first of the series, was fitted with two unusual features, both of which are pleasing. The first was an exterior deck and matching handrail that was made of composite material to mimic a teak deck. So clever is the technology behind such composites that this deck had been coloured and finished to look as if it had been weathered and aged. The effect is that of a very real-looking deck and the advantage is that not only is it lighter and easier to clean, it is also easily repairable if it should ever get damaged.

The second option was a clever entertainment control system from electronic wizards, Ships Electronic Services (SES) who have conceived ORCA. This highly intuitive, easy-to-use utility links the on-board iPads to the ship's system and allows guests to watch movies, control the AC, alter the lighting to change the mood, and even gives the ability to lower the yacht's window blinds. ORCA is compatible with most devices and can be configured to offer control from a majority of mobile phones, tablet PCs, infrared remote controls, PC or Mac. Using our own iPads, we were able to instantly use the built-in Wi-Fi capability to enable communication with our touch screens. When we opened up a browser page, it instantly correlated with the processor and allowed us access to all of the on-board entertainment systems. Director of SES, Paul Rees told us, "Our aim was to design software and hardware solutions that would make life easier on board any vessel and we are delighted with the results." And so, we might add, were we.



This guest cabin placed amidships is roomy and comfortable

Throughout the boat, the headroom and hull-side storage has been maximised, demonstrating that modern design and practicality can go hand-in-hand. The newly built hull provides increased space while still being capable of producing performance speeds from a choice of engines, the final delight in a truly remarkable new craft.

Future plans

Most Sunseekers quickly leave the shores

of the country where they are built, but this yacht is to stay in the UK and be berthed in the Channel Islands. For VAT purposes this is an area outside the EU jurisdiction, and without tax on the boat, the fuel that she uses and the berth she occupies is an attractive proposition when considering whereabouts in Europe to keep a yacht. Every 28-metre yacht will be unique and tailored to specific customer requirements offering a breakthrough

in interior layout and design with interior furnishings selected from the latest collection of materials and linings, ensuring that the striking exterior design continues throughout the interior. **IB**

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