

# Life under Sail

CELEBRATING THE SAILING LIFESTYLE

09/2019

**FOILED! ON THE WAY TO  
THE 36TH AMERICA'S CUP**

**SURVIVING THE WORLD'S  
WILDEST WATER**

**INSIDE THE YACHT  
INTERIORS REVOLUTION**

**BOAT**

A modern yacht interior featuring a large skylight and curved windows. The space is bright and airy, with a contemporary design. The text is overlaid on the image.

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SAILING YACHT DESIGNERS ARE TEARING UP THE RULE BOOK AND

# INSIDE

THROWING OPEN THEIR INTERIORS. LET THERE BE LIGHT, SPACE

# STORY

AND LUXURY, SAYS *MARILYN MOWER*



Previous pages: G2's upper and lower saloons. Above: Alithia, a 39.8m with interiors by Winch Design, has a nicely integrated entertainment area below the saloon



Right and above: Design Unlimited penned the living areas on this 50m performance sloop

**“We are getting close to being able to get rid of a lot of levels. We are working on a 42 metre boat that manages to have the saloon, dining and cockpit all on one level”**

Mark Tucker, founder, Design Unlimited

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Sailing yacht interiors have gone through a metamorphosis in the past two decades, primarily due to requests for lighter weight to increase performance, and modern naval architecture with wider beams and lifting keels. As with motor yachts, there has been a desire to get more natural light aboard. Yet today's sailing yacht interiors are anything but cookie-cutter.

We contacted some of the busiest design firms to hear what they have to say about sailing yacht interior trends – and discovered there isn't really a look, but more an increasing amount of owner involvement and a growing request for individual expression, often with the emphasis on relaxation.

“Sailing is a lifestyle rather than a mode of transportation,” says Ignacio Oliva-Velez, senior partner, production and sailing yachts at Winch Design. And therein lies a key requirement with the majority of sailing yachts – an innate informality and interaction with the crew, at least the deck crew and helmsman.

“My sailing boat clients are passionate about sailing; most have been sailing their whole lives, from dinghies on up,” says Mark Tucker, founder of UK studio Design Unlimited. “They tend to have strong ideas about what layouts work for them and get very involved in the details.”

One of the challenges, according to Tucker, is to create the kind of single main deck living that is possible on a motor yacht on a sailing yacht. “We are getting close to being able to get rid of a lot of levels. We are working on a 42 metre that manages to have the saloon, dining and cockpit all on one level,” he says.

It used to be that some people objected to the feeling of “going below” on a sailing yacht, especially through a



The side-by-side lounge and dining space on the Winch Design-penned Jeanneau utilises the growing trend for wider beams on modern yachts

**“If you compare new yachts to those of 20 years ago, you'll find they are 20 per cent wider”**

Ignacio Oliva-Velez, design manager, Winch Design

narrow companionway. Today, good designers know how to create a better flow between the cockpit and the inside of the boat, with wide glass hatches into deck saloons and sometimes, depending on the size of the yacht, even full height glass doors. On flush deck yachts, or those with recessed cockpits and very low coachroofs, this is trickier, but the use of toughened glass makes it feasible.

Opening boats to the sea has always been difficult but some yards are challenging the boundaries, says Tucker. “Pink Gin [by Baltic Yachts] and the Perini guys have addressed the last big lifestyle issues of openness with the inclusion of balconies in the hulls for staterooms and beach club fold-outs. I suppose the next thing is to put windows under the water on sailing yachts.”

“If you compare new yachts to those of 20 years ago, you'll find they are 20 per cent wider now,” says Oliva-Velez. “There might be three steps now from the dining table to the sofa on a 60-footer [18 metre]. We see interiors influenced by performance hulls which are wider and more stable.”

Oliva-Velez is a sailor himself and is keen to see what influences canting keels and foils developed for round-the-world racing boats, IMOCA and the America's Cup will have on cruisers. “The Formula One of sailing has been multihulls for the last 10 years, but except for the Caribbean charter market, multihull sailing yachts haven't really caught on for larger boats, probably because they are harder to park.”

Oliva-Velez says the most dynamic part of the sailing yacht marketplace at the moment is the owner-driven 25- to 40-metre sloop. “Because the owners are driving, it requires changes to the layouts of the sailing and social cockpits. They often are not so separated as before. Imagine that you are sailing and you stop and anchor for a swim. The cockpit has to change from operation to social and at night your dining area may become the cinema lounge. As designers, we have to think more about transitioning the spaces from one function to another and also how the crew are going to access the deck for service.”

Tucker agrees, saying that designing spaces within spaces is one way to make up for not having multiple decks. “This means there are places to tuck into for sailing within the larger spaces for use in harbour mode.”

Mark Whiteley, of the eponymous UK design firm, notes that the popularity of the performance cruiser market puts pressure on designers to look at the different functions for crossover yachts that do occasional regattas. “Aquarius is a good example. That yacht can go from a regatta back to owner mode in an hour.”

Technology is also reducing the amount of space necessary for running the yacht. “Instead of the large navigation stations we used to have, you can practically run the boats from a tablet,” says Oliva-Velez. On a 90-footer we are designing, this allows us to use the space that once would have been a nav station tucked under the cockpit for a guest service area, coffee or breakfast bar.”



Ignacio Oliva-Velez (top) and Mark Tucker are both keen sailors as well as leading interior designers

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