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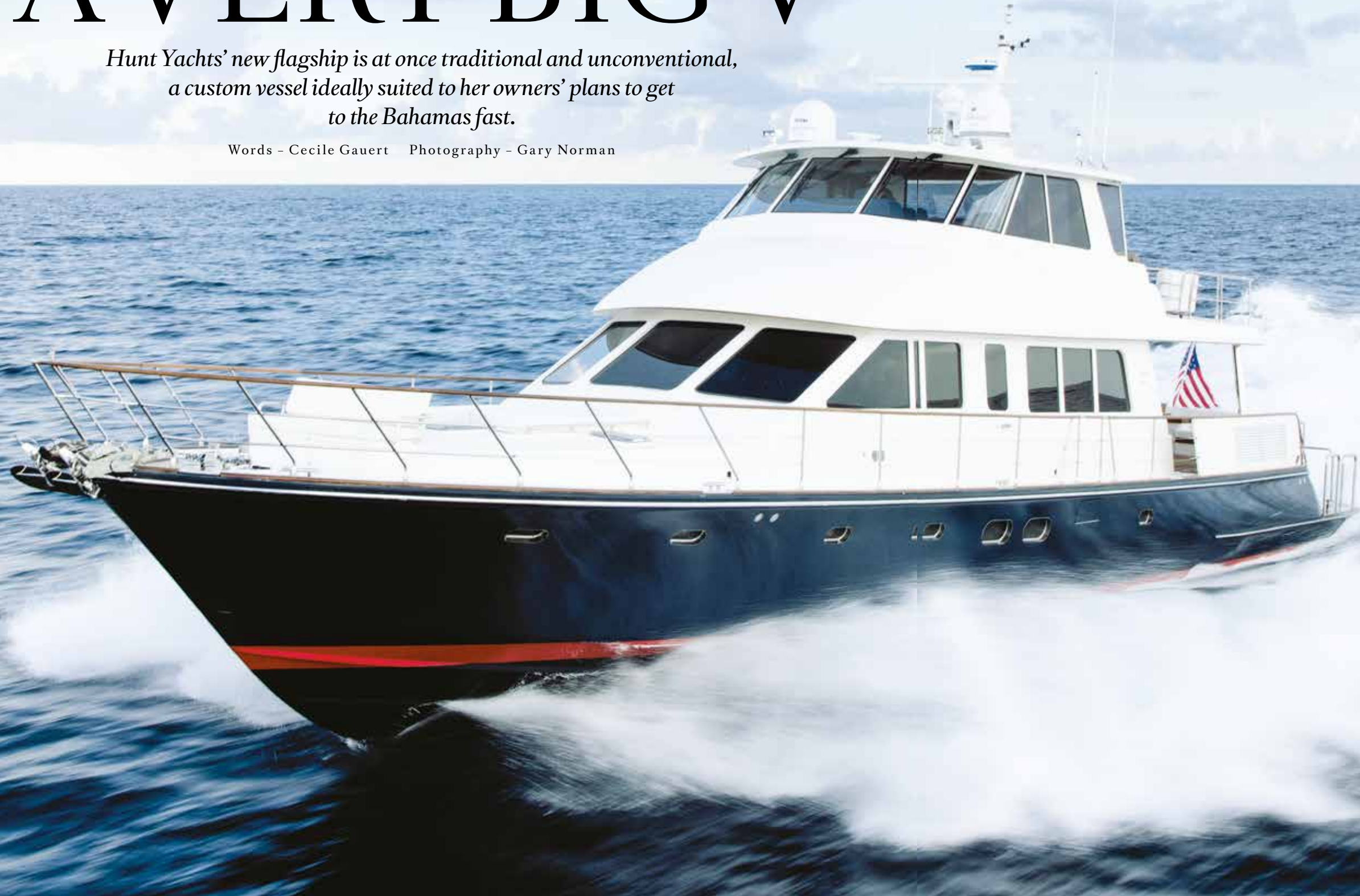
Sneak peek at the Miami boat show

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A VERY BIG V

Hunt Yachts' new flagship is at once traditional and unconventional, a custom vessel ideally suited to her owners' plans to get to the Bahamas fast.

Words - Cecile Gauert Photography - Gary Norman



You could be forgiven for thinking that Hunt Yachts only builds day cruisers or center consoles. At the 2015 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, the company unveiled the Hunt 32 center console, a nice choice as a tender for a superyacht with optional inboard engines or, as the company describes it, a “battlewagon for the weekend warrior.” But Hunt Yachts has built much bigger boats. In fact, a few weeks before the boat show, a small team worked overtime to finish the new flagship, the Hunt 80. Unfortunately, the yacht’s publicity-shy owners were in a hurry to enjoy their new vessel. So the builder only had a small window to show off its latest creation. Offloaded from a transport ship from Taiwan, the Hunt 80 made a discreet stopover in Fort Lauderdale. Luckily, we were able to take a look.

“Hunt Yachts’ president, Peter Van Lancker, ball cap on, sleeves up and a bottle of cleaner in hand, was busy chasing smudges, even perhaps a few imaginary ones, on the aft deck lounge furniture. A couple of other perfectionists were also on board that day: the yacht’s project manager, Bob Riemens, and interior designer, Martha Coolidge, knee-deep in plastic wrapping as she unpacked accessories.

Riemens, who worked at Hinckley in the late 1990s, has spent years overseeing the construction of both sail and power projects. In Antalya, Turkey, he ran a tight ship keeping the 46-meter trideck Vicem Vulcan on track to meet stringent weight requirements and delivery deadline. Last year, he commuted to Kaohsiung, Taiwan, to follow the construction of the Hunt flagship, which was built in composite in only a few months. Announced in January 2014, the yacht was delivered in late October 2015.

How did a quintessential northeast U.S. boat name wind up in Taiwan? Van Lancker explains that a few years ago he struck an agreement with Global Yacht Builders to build larger yachts at its facility there. The first product of that association was a 68-footer with styling and naval architecture by Hunt Design (a.k.a. C. Raymond Hunt Associates). The Hunt 80 is the second, and a third yacht, a 72-footer, is currently in build. All boats 44 feet and

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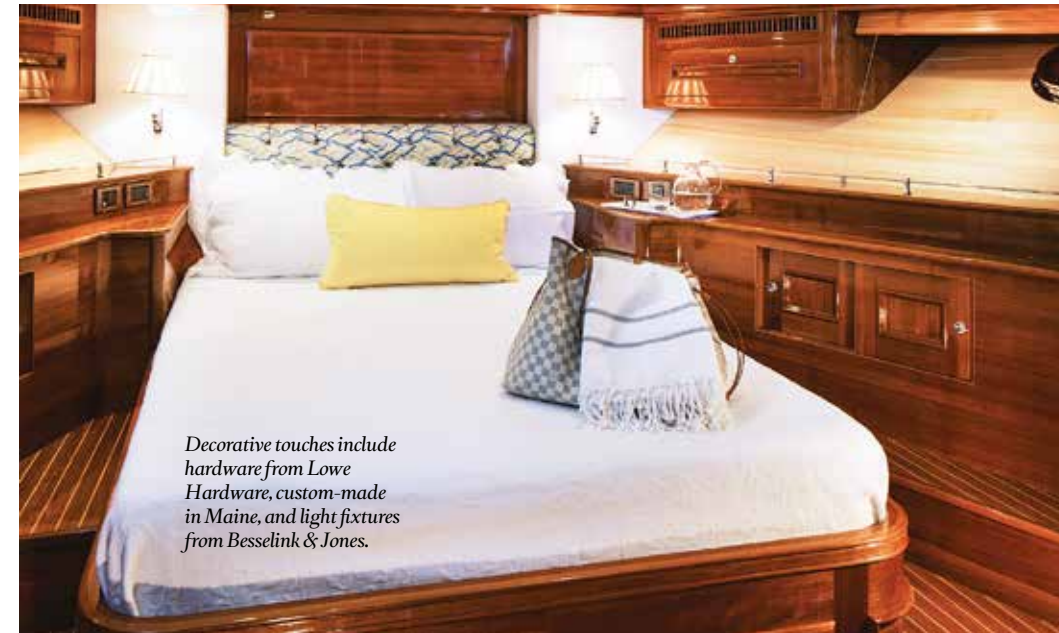
above, now grouped under the moniker of Ocean Series, are being built in Kaohsiung, while Hunt Yachts continues to build its Harrier and Surfhunter series and center consoles in the U.S.

From the outside the Hunt 80 is a great-looking vessel, strong and purposeful-looking, despite her enclosed pilothouse. That is particularly true when she's going full speed with a widening swash of sea foam stirred by her twin Hamilton waterjets. These powerful jets were inherent to the design; the owners, who cruise the Bahamian shallows, were keen on keeping the yacht's draft minimal.

Indeed, the whole project is "highly custom" said Van Lancker, although there was precedent for it. The flybridge version of the Hunt 68 was the inspiration.

Hunt Design's president, Winn Willard, says that the 68 simply was not large enough to accommodate all that the owners wanted, especially the space-intensive waterjets. Their boat had to go bigger. In actuality, when all is said and done, the yacht is closer to 90 feet than 80 feet (the exact LOA is 87 feet when including the large swim platform). Hunt Design, which is known for yachts that combine traditional elements with nice proportions and great seakeeping abilities but also commercial vessels, including jet boats, did the styling and naval architecture for the new 80.

The designers successfully compensated for the extra height with horizontal lines parallel to the sheer. The



Decorative touches include hardware from Lowe Hardware, custom-made in Maine, and light fixtures from Besselink & Jones.



blue hull paint, red boot stripe, elongated bow shape and elegant stainless steel rails capped with teak also help make this yacht a head-turner.

The Hunt 80 is based on the company's reputed deep-V hull. "The hull shapes are in the same geometric family. The same principles apply [regardless of size]. They're finer, sharper, more slender hulls, so they go through the water easily.... If you walk in a boat show, and look at the bow of our boats, and look at another boat, you will see the difference – [the others] are fatter," says Willard. The trade-off is in the accommodation space, but the narrower Hunt hull is more forgiving in rough weather.

It was this reputation for performance and seakeeping that attracted these owners. They previously had a European-built sports yacht and found it frustrating that they could not take it out when it got a bit blustery, Van Lancker says. They also really like going fast on their 25-foot Hunt Harrier.

The top speed goal for this Hunt 80 was more than 30 knots, a speed nearly reached during sea trials, courtesy of her powerful MTU engines and big waterjets. But the real benefit of these jets is that this boat has the kind of draft (four feet maximum) that allows reaching nice, secluded moorings or fitting neatly behind a waterfront house. Although they can be a little tricky to operate, jet boats are also quite maneuverable.

As we walk around the yacht's generous decks, well-finished in teak planking, Van Lancker says that Hunt designs boats from the outside. "We're not about to compromise on that," he says. But truly, with an estimated 80,000 man hours in this yacht, there does not appear to be any compromise outside or inside.

The owners entrusted Coolidge to create a detailed and warm interior. She used a traditional combination of teak and holly for the soles and glossed teak on most



bulkheads. Trim and crown moldings accent the wooden surfaces while panels of white outdoor linen by Holland & Sherry add contrast and a cozy, modern touch.

Coolidge, a detail-oriented designer with an architectural background, does her renderings in watercolor. The Taiwanese craftsmen have beautifully translated the delicate images that she produced for each area of the yacht – the full-beam master (located aft), the twin cabin, the VIP and the main salon and dining area.

Coolidge is also working with Hunt on the next installment of the Ocean Series. That one will have an all-wood interior, she says. Not only will it have a different feel, it will have a completely different power plant. That is part of the custom options. The owners have opted for twin Caterpillar engines and conventional propellers inside tunnels. The anticipated top speed for the 72-footer is 38 knots.

It sounds like Hunt is intent on going full speed ahead. ■



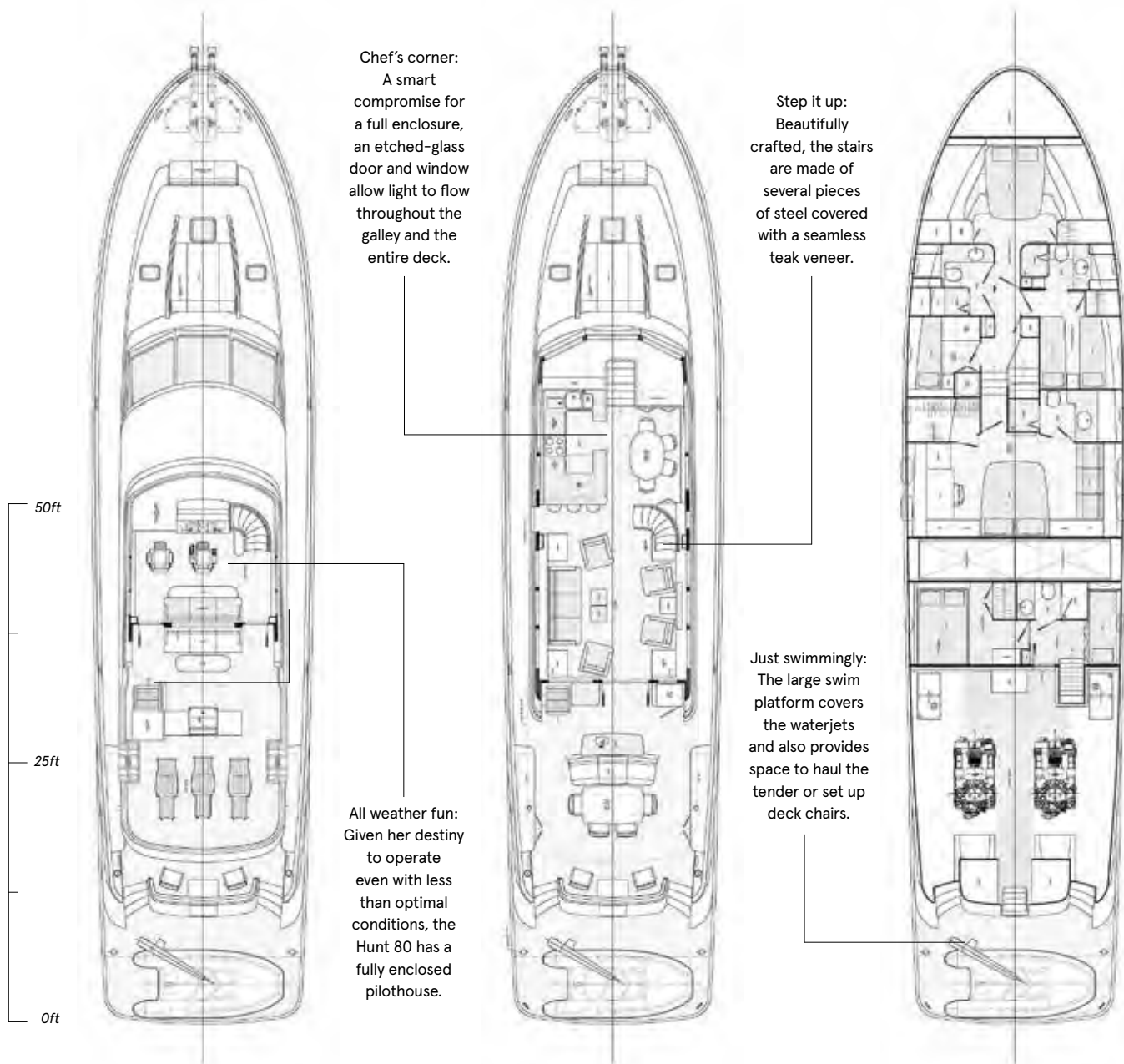
Classic but relaxed with its teak-and-holly flooring, the salon opens out onto one of two outdoor dining areas (far right).

Hunt 80 – Hunt Yachts

Bridge deck

Main deck

Lower deck



LOA: 87' (26.5m)
LWL: 71' 11" (22.9m)
Beam: 19' 6" (5.9m)
Draft: 4' (1.2m)
Displacement:
 140,000 pounds (full load)
Gross tonnage: 99 GT

Power: 2 x 1,600-hp
 MTU 16V 2000 M94
Water jets: 2 x Hamilton
 HM651
Speed (max/cruise):
 29/24 knots
Range: 500 nm @ 18 knots
 or 1,500 nm @ 11 knots

Fuel capacity:
 2,150 U.S. gallons
Freshwater capacity:
 500 U.S. gallons
Owner and guests: 7
Crew: 3
Tender: Novurania 430DL

Construction: GRP
Naval architecture:
 C. Raymond Hunt Associates
Exterior styling:
 C. Raymond Hunt Associates
Interior design:
 CRHA/Martha Coolidge

Builder/year:
 Hunt Yachts/2015
 Kaohsiung, Taiwan
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 e: info@huntyachts.com
 w: huntyachts.com