

Smart and Sexy

BY KIM KAVIN



THE 213-FOOT **BENETTI SEANNA** IS CAREFULLY

DESIGNED TO SEEM EFFORTLESSLY APPEALING.

I couldn't resist the elliptical. Standing there in my button-down, collared shirt without even a pretense of athleticism, I just had to climb onto the thing for the sheer pleasure of the experience.

It was the end of my tour through the 213-foot Benetti *Seanna*, and I was down in the boat's belly, on the starboard side of the lazarette in the gymnasium. I had no idea the amount of time that the owners had spent working with design firm Redman Whiteley Dixon on the placement of this workout room, which in various versions of the general arrangement plans had been as far away as the sun deck. All I knew is that the final product was practically as inviting as a cinema, with the elliptical, treadmill and other equipment facing a drop-down teak platform over the sea. I stepped onto the machine and spun the pedals a few rounds, looking out at the view, absolutely mesmerized. The floor-to-ceiling opening in the side of the yacht provided a show that was way better than any 3-D Hollywood film. I was so focused on what I was seeing that it took me a few moments to notice the perfectly placed air-conditioning vents, which were keeping me cool without blowing directly on me. Fresh Caribbean air circulated around too, almost as if I were working out on a beach.

"You're right there at water level, you have a great view, and you can go for a dip. It just makes sense," designer Tony Dixon told me later from his office in the United Kingdom. "These

start, and she's custom through and through. *Seanna* was built specifically to appeal to charter clients and is infused with the owners' knowledge about the types of spaces that actually get used. The thoughtful layout, smart amenities and stunning decor made *Seanna* one of the brightest stars at the hundred-boat Antigua Charter Yacht Show this past December, where she made her public debut and finally became available for bookings after a year of tempting the world with little more than photographs.

Although she launched in 2011, *Seanna* spent her first year afloat being used by her owners and one exceptionally lucky charter client. He was the first to book her last winter in the Caribbean, and he liked her so much that he tied her up for another four (count 'em!) charters in the Mediterranean this past summer, when her lowest base rate topped a half-million dollars per week. Between that and the owners taking her to the Olympic Games in London, *Seanna* has been a charter yacht much watched and in demand, but difficult to book until now.

"This is a very, very well-conceived yacht that is already proving to attract clients with the most exacting expectations," says marketing director Alev Karagulle of Burgess Yachts, which markets *Seanna* for charter. "So far, the yacht has been relatively under the charter radar. If I was still a charter broker, the yacht would be at the very top of my list."

so they could both get massages at once," he says. "So that was important, getting that dual space."

Also on the main deck, where most superyachts have a huge formal dining area amidships, *Seanna* has a library to port and a dining table to starboard. The table, most of the time, is sized like a game table with four chairs. It can extend to serve all 12 guests for dinner, but the owners rarely dined inside aboard their previous yacht and thought the space was better served by adding the library — a rich, warm room whose finishing touches include a working gas fireplace.

"The library is not what you're expecting," Dixon says. "It's a small enough room that you can sit on the sofa reading a book on your own and be very comfortable. I think it's a refreshing difference from the other boats that have big, party-style rooms everywhere. Sometimes, even on a big boat, you want a quiet space."

Another space aboard *Seanna* that received the designer's special attention is the entryway's grand staircase, which Dixon says is among his favorite features. Originally, the Benetti design plans called for the staircase to be narrower; functional, but not as impressive as the owners wanted for the yacht's formal, starboard-side foyer. The design team worked with Benetti to expand the staircase width, not only adding grandeur to the dark wenge and polished-nickel design, but also making the marble-

RECENT BENETTI BUILDS

Benetti has been launching yacht after yacht the past couple of years, each with noteworthy characteristics. Here's a look at what's new from the Italian shipyard in both the private and charter realms:

Checkmate. She's heralded as a 2013 design even though she was launched at the end of 2012. Renowned designer Francois Zuretti handled this Vision 145's interior decor, which features cherry and madrona burl woodwork. She's part of the Northrop and Johnson charter fleet, taking 10 guests at a lowest weekly base rate of \$200,000.

Ocean Drive. This is the third Delfino 93 from Benetti, launched in 2012. She features the BEST system (Benetti Exclusive Sea Technology), which allows touchpad control of lighting, climate control, and digital movies and music. The owners plan to spend an extensive amount of time aboard, cruising the U.S. Eastern Seaboard.

Option B. She's a 121 Classic, an all-fiberglass build that splashed in 2012. Stefano Righini worked on exterior styling while Zuretti Design handled the interior decor. She accommodates 10 guests with seven crew.

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— TONY DIXON OF REDMAN WHITELEY DIXON DESIGN



This 213-foot Benetti's master suite (above left) includes a true sitting room that is separate from the massive sleeping area. *Seanna's* enclosed section of the sun deck (above right) feels like a relaxing beach house with its teak-lined walls. The fabrics and furnishings throughout the guest areas (opposite) on this yacht are both contemporary and stylish, but also neutral enough to appeal to a plethora of charter clients.

owners really knew what they wanted."

That's because *Seanna's* owners have spent a great deal of time aboard superyachts figuring out what works, what's a waste of space, and which great new ideas are worth a serious try. Their previous yacht was *Amnesia*, a well-received 180-foot Benetti that is now known as *Altitude*. The owners bought her on the brokerage market and liked her well enough, but *Seanna* has been their project from the

While many spaces aboard *Seanna* left industry experts aglow, the one most talked about was her double massage room, which is forward on the main deck's starboard side. It has a true spa feel with massive windows and a closeable panel that can allow for two separate massages or one double massage at a time.

The idea for this feature emerged from the owners' experience of having a single-bed massage room aboard *Amnesia*, Dixon told me. "They used to set up a massage table in their cabin

COURTESY BENETTI YACHTS



tread steps easier for guests to traverse, as if the staircase were in a sizable home.

During my tour, the indoor spaces that made my eyes pop wide open were the main-deck salon, which is really more of a cinema room, and the bridge-deck sky lounge, which feels like four spaces in one. There's a stunning glass bar that can be lighted for parties, a table for playing cards and games, and two separate lounge areas adjacent to a wall of glass that slides open to connect the outdoor dining area to the indoor space.

Bosun Michael Board showed me his favorite sky-lounge feature: the Apple AirPlay entertainment system. Docking stations for iPhone or iPad are available aboard *Seanna*, but are already obsolete. When your favorite Apple gizmo comes within receiving distance of the yacht's server, an icon pops up on your screen, allowing you to play your own music on the yacht's speakers, control the volume and more.

One level up from *Seanna's* sky lounge is the sun deck, which is also noteworthy for its smart design. At first, when I entered the space, I felt a bit out of sorts. I'm used to a long, flat teak deck with variously sized sun pads, a bar and a hot tub. *Seanna* has those things, but arranged differently because the owners wanted a deck that could be enjoyed at all times of day, as opposed to just the few hours each day that most sun decks are used.

Seanna's sun deck is really three connected areas at different levels, a few steps up or down from one another. Forward is a hot tub, a bar and a dining table with seating for 12 guests in a space that is partly lowered from the rest of the deck, sunken in a way that allows privacy from prying eyes aboard neighboring superyachts in port. Aft on the sun deck is a sunning area with a half-dozen chaise lounges and removable umbrellas.

Clockwise from below: The sun deck's high rails and windscreen help *Seanna's* guests enjoy privacy even next to other yachts. A starboard entry foyer includes a mirror forward that makes the space seem infinite. Her tender has as much style as her interior. Seaside run, anyone?

SUBLIME SUPERYACHT

FOR MORE STUNNING SHOTS OF SEANNA AND TO SEE HER DECK PLANS, VISIT YACHTINGMAGAZINE.COM.

Amidships is the sun deck's real talking point — what the crew calls the veranda — a teak-enclosed space that is air-conditioned as well as open to the elements and that is sized to be comfortable for the owners' 6-foot-6-inch son.

"The owners wanted one area that was big enough to seat and entertain everybody," Dixon says. "They wanted to feel like they were in a penthouse apartment with lots of people, but not all crushed into each other. That space has a homey feel. There's shelving on the walls. We had an advantage in working with Sue Young, an interior decorator from Seattle who works on the owners' houses. She introduced a lot of softness and warmth through art, artifacts, all these bits and pieces that make the boat look like a home and feel very relaxed."

With all of these areas for guests to enjoy, precious little time is likely to be spent in the staterooms. Even so, there are seven of them as opposed to the six that are usually found aboard charter yachts this size for 12 guests, once again giving *Seanna* a market advantage. The main-deck master is truly a suite, too. It includes a private office, a king-size bed, a pair of proper seating areas, his-and-her bathrooms (his doubles as a steam shower while hers has a tub), his-and-her dressing areas and the same iPad controls as the rest of the yacht for the digital entertainment server, window dressings, air conditioning and lighting.

As with the gymnasium and that fabulously enticing elliptical machine, I found all of these rooms to be instantly welcoming and openly inviting. I had the same reaction to



Seanna's exquisite, 27-foot mahogany StanCraft tender, which begged to be shown off with a cruise around the harbor. It took me a while to realize it, but all of these things combined to make me feel different aboard *Seanna* than I do aboard most other big yachts. I wasn't thinking about how she'd been built or designed; I was being sucked into the experience of being on board. It wasn't just the beautiful decor or the spaces or amenities, but instead all of the thought that had gone into how people would actually use everything. There's a great deal to look at and love aboard *Seanna*, but what exceeds all

expectations are the things that most people won't notice at first, things conceived with exacting purpose to appear perfectly natural.

"The general arrangements look very conventional, but there's a lot more going on aboard this boat than people might realize," as Dixon puts it. "It's great when it all works out and the boat actually gets used. That's really the whole point, isn't it?"

Seanna is part of the Burgess Yachts charter fleet. She takes 12 guests with 16 crew at a lowest weekly base rate of approximately \$570,000.